



ゲームの終わり「下」

ログ・ホライズン

4

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TOUNO, Mamare



橙乃 ままれ 著 ハラカズヒロ 画

LOG HORIZON

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ログ・ホライズン



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橙乃ままれ既刊作品

- ▶ **まおゆう魔王勇者 1** 「この我のものとなれ、勇者よ」「断る!!」
- ▶ **まおゆう魔王勇者 2** 忽鄰塔(クリルタイ)の陰謀
- ▶ **まおゆう魔王勇者 3** 聖鍵(せいけん)遠征軍
- ▶ **まおゆう魔王勇者 4** この手のできること

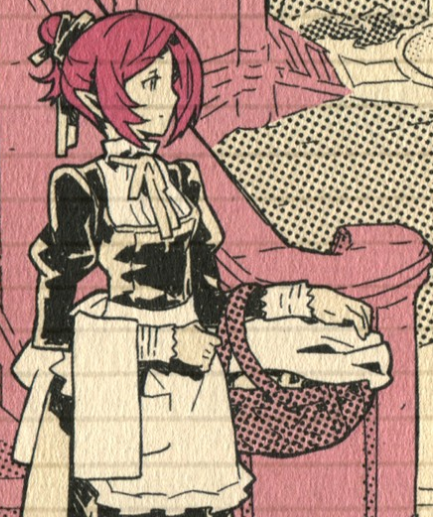
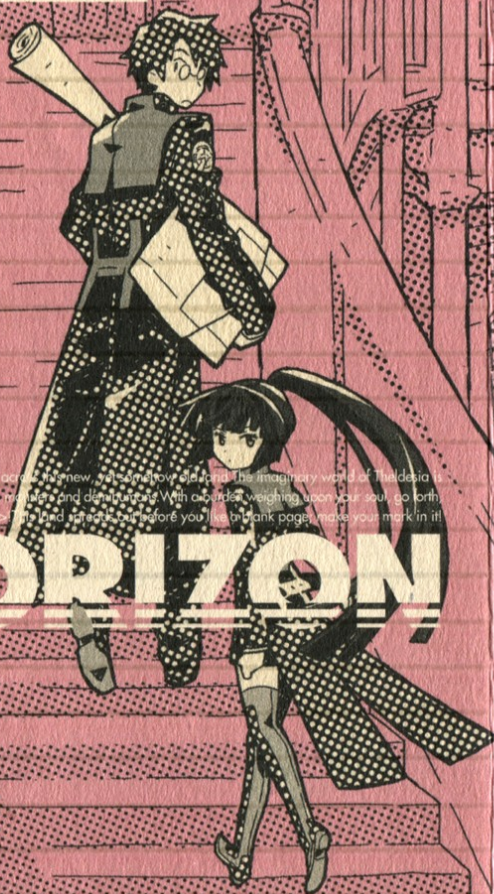
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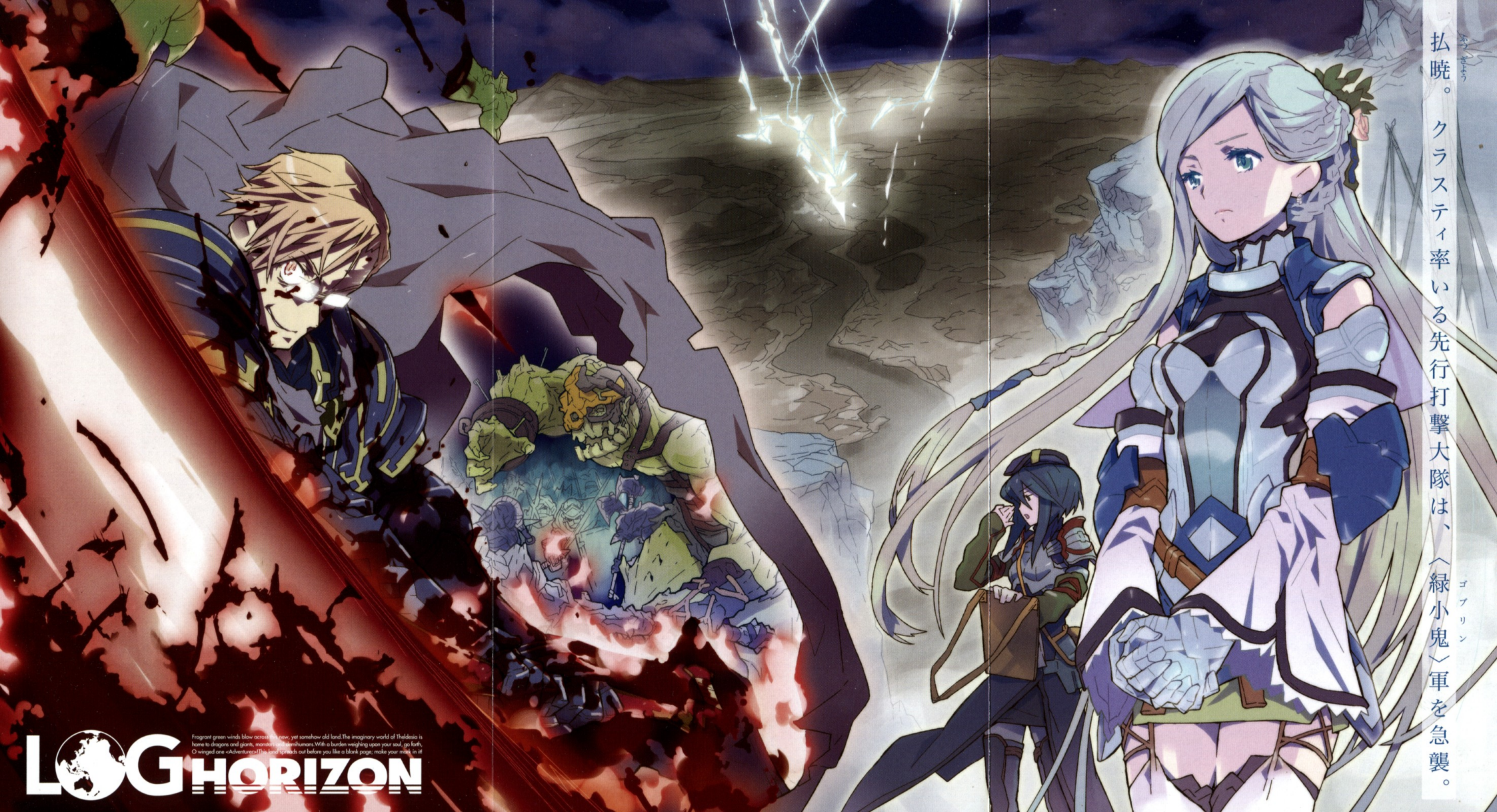
- ▶ **ログ・ホライズン 1** 異世界のはじまり
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以下続刊

LOG HORIZON

Fragrant green winds blow across the new, yet somehow old, land of the imaginary world of Fieldopia. Intricate adventures await, marvelous and demanding. With our lives weighing upon your soul, go forth. Owingest soul, adventures are laid before you. Let's break pages, make your mark in it!





LOG HORIZON

Fragrant green winds blow across a barren, yet somehow old land. The imaginary world of The Horizon is home to dragons and giants, monsters and steamhuns. With a burden weighing upon your soul, go forth, winged one. Adventure! This land spreads out before you like a blank page; make your mark in it!

払暁。 クラスティ率いる先行打撃大隊は、
ゴブリン 軍を急襲。

キャラクター 人気投票祭りっっ!!

腹ぐる、おばんっ好きから美少女まで個性豊かなログ・ホライズンのメンバーたち。あなたのお気に入りだれ?

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LOG HORIZON

Fragrant green winds blow across this new, yet somehow old land. The imaginary world of Theldesia is home to dragons and giants, monsters and demihumans. With a burden weighing upon your soul, go forth, O winged one <Adventurer>! This land spreads out before you like a blank page; make your mark in it!

ロ グ ・ ホ ラ イ ズ ン

4 ゲームの終わり【下】

橙乃ままれ

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AFTERWORD

腹ぐるろ眼鏡



伝説のプレイ集団〈放蕩者の茶会〉で参謀役を務めていた思案派の〈付与術師〉。歴戦の古参プレイヤーであるが、中身は引きこもりぎみのハードコアゲーマー大学生。

シロエ



美少女暗殺者

アカツキ

以前は女性であることを隠し、寡黙な男性としてプレイしていたが、ゲームの世界に飲み込まれたあとは現実世界と同じ姿を取り戻し、小柄な凄腕〈暗殺者〉として活動を開始。



サムライ少年

トウヤ

〈エルダー・テイル〉をはじめてすぐ〈大災害〉に遭遇。シロエに救出されるまで、凶悪ギルドに虐げられていたが、そもそもは芯の強い少年。ミノリとは双子の姉弟。

中学生巫女



ミノリ

責任感の強い性格で、活発で無茶をしがちな弟トウヤの世話をやく。しかし双子として、戦士職のトウヤと回復職のミノリは息のあったコンビネーションを見せることも。

おさげ女子高生



五十鈴

男の子としゃべるのは得意ではないが、なぜかルンデルハウスとは軽口をたたきあえる仲に。〈吟遊詩人〉にしては珍しい両手槍使いなのは、初心者ゆえ見た目で選んだことによる。

わんこ王子



ルンデルハウス

非常にプライドが高く、その発言は時として傲慢に聞こえるが、悪気はない。自分の職である〈妖術師〉に大きな誇りを感じている熱血型。見た目は古典少女漫画風ハンサム。



異世界にとじこめられて3ヶ月。〈エルダー・テイル〉も季節は夏。マリエの発案で、新人を鍛える海辺での合宿が開始される。

〈記録の地平線〉からは新人のトウヤと

ミノリ、お目付け役として直継、にやん太が参加した。新人プレイヤーたちは、ぶつかり合い、苦しみ葛藤しながらも、戦闘において重要な「チームワーク」を体得していく。

一方、同じ頃、アキバの街を自治する〈円卓会議〉に届いた書状により、シロエたち〈円卓会議〉の代表らは、大地人の〈自由都市同盟イースタイル〉との交渉にのぞむため、アキバの街を離れた。

〈冒険者〉と〈大地人〉の共存は今後必須と認識しながらも、互いの手の内をよみあい、なかなか前に進まない同盟交渉。そんなとき、新人合宿中のマリエが海岸をうめつくすほどの〈水棲緑鬼〉を発見。それは〈エルダー・テイル〉にかつてない危機が迫っている前兆であった。



<櫛と手鏡>

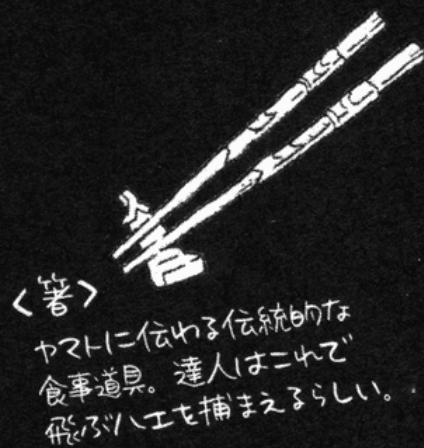
身だしなみを整える道具。

曲がり角の向こうを見たりもする



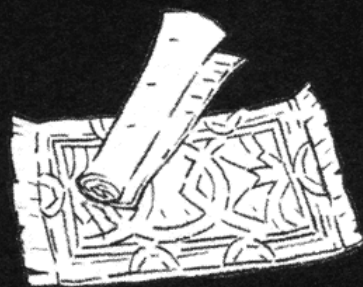
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荷物をまとめたり、
崖のぼりにつかったり、
悪党を縛ったり。



〈箸〉

ヤマトに伝わる伝統的な
食事道具。達人はこれで
飛ぶツバエを捕まえるらしい。



くじゅうたん>

敷物のひとつ。
ど二かに空を飛ぶものも
あるらしい……。



くろキニード
着こなせばジエントル。
蝶ネクタイのみだと
オーバージエントル
変態紳士。



CHAPTER.

THE RETURN OF THE GOBLIN KING [ゴブリン王の帰還]



▶ NAME: KRUSTY

▶ LEVEL: 90

▶ RACE: HUMAN

▶ CLASS: GUARDIAN

▶ HP: 13871

▶ MP: 6847

▶ ITEM 1:

[DEMON-AXE OF FRESH BLOOD]

A LEVEL 90 PHANTASMAL-CLASS TWO-HANDED AXE. ATTRACTS MONSTERS AND RAISES ITS ATTACK ACCORDING TO HATE. AMONGST THE CURRENTLY KNOWN WEAPONS, IT BOASTS THE HIGHEST ATTACK POWER SO IT IS MUCH YEARNED FOR BY MANY ADVENTURERS.



▶ ITEM 2:

[EINHERJAR ARMOR]

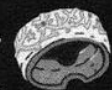
SAID TO BE ONLY WORN BY BRAVE WARRIORS BEING LED BY VALKYRIES TO BATTLE AT GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG. PHANTASMAL-CLASS FULL-BODY ARMOR OF EBONY STEEL. SIGNIFICANTLY RAISES STRENGTH AND STAMINA. REDUCES DAMAGE FROM GIANT AND UNDEAD TYPES.



▶ ITEM 3:

[SECOND RAGE]

STONE BANGLE THAT CANCELS COOLDOWN OF BERSEKER SKILLS AND ALLOWS ITS REUSE. PROLONGS DEATH BY 10 SECONDS BY SENDING WEAPER INTO A STATE OF FRENZY. ALSO REFERRED TO AS 'RAGE AGAIN'



Name: Krusty

Level: 90

Race: Human

Class: Guardian

HP: 13871

MP: 6847

Equipment

Demon-Axe of Fresh Blood
A level 90 Phantasmal-class two-handed axe. Attracts monsters and raises its attack according to Hate. Amongst the currently known weapons, it boasts the highest attack power so it is much yearned for by many Adventurers.

Einherjar Armor
Said to be only worn by brave warriors being led by Valkyries to battle at Götterdämmerung. Phantasmal-class full-body armor of ebony steel. Significantly raises strength and stamina. Reduces damage from Giant and Undead types.

Second Rage
Stone bangle that cancels cooldown of Berserker skills and allows its reuse. Prolongs death by 10 seconds by sending wearer into a state of frenzy. Also referred to as 'Rage Again'

Chapter 1: The Return of the Goblin King

Part 1

While Maryele was protecting the beginners and Shouryuu was charging into the Sahuagin horde with a roar, a battle also broke out in the central hilly region of Sand Leaf peninsula.

The enemy was goblins.

They came out of nowhere, sweeping through the forest in small patrol groups.

Naotsugu and the others had fought off tens of waves in the plaza in front of Ragranda Forest. There were 13 people here, 5 from Minori's party, 6 from the higher-level party, Naotsugu, and the cleric from Black Sword Knights' Rezarick.

When they encountered the first batch, they thought it was just a group of wandering goblins.

But after several battles, Naotsugu and the others changed their minds, thinking they were positioned in the way of a small-scale tribal migration. When they battled for the 6th time, they could not ignore this anymore.

Nyanta was scouting in the mountain ahead.

The 13 players awaited Nyanta's return as they packed their camp site and remained alert.

In terms of battle power, goblins were not a threat. They were one of the major forces of the demihumans and had a variety of troop types, from a military point of view they were very powerful. But their level was between 10-20, so if it was 1 on 1, beginners who were around level 25 like Minori's party were strong enough to handle them.

Even though the situation was unclear, the beginners still went about their businesses calmly, packing their campsite and handing the heavy items to Naotsugu and Rezarick with their bags of holding. They kept the light, everyday items in their normal backpacks.

"Very suspicious."

"Ah?"

Naotsugu who was folding the tent canvas said, and Rezarick besides him asked him with a grunt.

"Irritating, I hate irritating situations, it has a feeling of impending misfortune."

"But it is just goblins, right?"

Rezarick gave a 'no big deal' look, he could handle 10-20 goblins by himself.

"Don't you think the encounter rate for goblins in the hills is very high today?"

"Hmm...."

Naotsugu peeked at the beginners, they were saddling the horses and clearing the campfire.

"There are many beginners around too, I think this could turn out pretty bad."

"Hmm..."

Rezarick was a veteran player from the big guild Black Sword Knights of Akiba. He did not laugh off Naotsugu's words, but thought deeply about it.

The grass swayed slightly and a slender figure appeared in the plaza.

A slender gentleman with the head of a cat in a green corduroy jacket with a tie... it was Nyanta. His eyes were thin slits as usual, but he had a serious expression as he approached Naotsugu and the others.

"How is it?"

"Nya."

Nyanta's serious attitude made the 2 camp leaders come to him.

The beginners were still hard at work and did not notice Nyanta had returned.

"It is quite bad nya, a large scale army... at least a goblin army of a few thousand is moving along the ridge on the other side nya. Their actual numbers... to be frank, I do not know nya."

Rezarick's face tensed up when Nyanta finished.

There were incidents of goblin groups moving together before, no, goblins were a demihuman race that liked to make military maneuvers. They were always banding up and pillaging in groups, but an army numbering in the thousands marching together was rare even for goblins.

Goblins had low intellects, they were basically like a virus, pillaging the neighboring towns.

There was something out of place here, the 3 veterans could smell it and were nervous because of this.

"Tch, guess it can't be helped."

Naotsugu nodded as if he understood something, and asked Nyanta if he had contacted anyone.

"I have reported to Shiroe-cchi nya, but I can't contact Maryele-san and Shouryuu-kun nya."

"Can't contact?"

"Maybe they are taking a nap, busy with a battle, or are in telepathy contact with someone else nya."

Nyanta spoke calmly, but he was not as calm as he usually was.

Nyanta jokingly said 'taking a nap' just now, while it might have happened if it were Maryele, it was hard to imagine Shouryuu being like this. After hearing about this, Rezarick had a faraway gaze in his eyes, an expression one had when using telepathy.

Naotsugu and Nyanta stopped their discussion and waited for his news, but Rezarick replied: "No good, there must be members of the Black Sword Knights at the beach, but I can't contact them either."

Naotsugu and Nyanta did not have the contacts of any other Crescent Moon Alliance members. Nyanta still had Serara on his friend list, but she was right beside them packing up the camp.

They had met with the other younger members several times now, but they had always done it through Shouryuu or talked face to face. Failing to register the other members was something that Naotsugu and the others overlooked.

The 3 of them tried to grasp the situation.

There were many possibilities, but they had to prepare for the worst too.

But no matter how the situation was, they could not abandon the beginners and rush to the beach.

Even if the goblins were low in level, if there were several thousands of them on the other side of the ridge, there were probably even more hidden in the forest.

They could not leave the beginners behind.

"How does the situation with the goblins look?"

"The ones heading into the valley are a big scale pillaging tribe nya, it looks like the whole mountain is moving nya. It is the first time I have seen such a massive army nya, I even saw some hobgoblins and trolls nya... There are also groups of orcs, this is a proper invading army nya. They are heading in the west southwest direction, but I can't confirm their target destination nya..."

"So the ones we encountered are just the scouting party?"

Minori gasped.

Naotsugu turned and saw the party with Minori and Touya in the lead standing to one side, all of them with stiff expressions and tense bodies. It seemed they had heard the conversation.

"Several thousand... just one mountain ridge away?"

Rundelhaus turned his gaze to the forest attempting to see through the trees. His face did not reflect fear and had a sense of determination.

The 3 camp leaders could not find the right words to say momentarily.
Serara said in a clear voice

"I am in charge of the beginners in Crescent Moon Alliance, so, because of that, I registered all of them on my friend list, right? Isuzu also registered them, right?"

"Y, yeah. Of course."

"Hmmm, yeah, of course!"

"Is it okay to ask them about their situation?"

Before Naotsugu could speak, Minori had already asked. The 2 of them nodded and opened their friend lists. Naotsugu scratched his head and mocked himself for overlooking this. He forgot that Serara and Isuzu were in the Crescent Moon Alliance and could contact the other members easily.

Now that he thought about it, it was really obvious.

There was no point in hiding the truth now.

Since they had to tell everyone when they went back to base anyway, Naotsugu and Rezarick gathered the 6 members from the higher-level party as well and explained the situation briefly.

They were scheduled to return to the school campus in the afternoon, but now that they were surrounded by the goblin army, they could not continue to raid the dungeon. The problem now was which route to take and the situation of the other training teams in the area.

Serara and Isuzu were talking to someone.

From the intelligence gathered by the 2 of them, there was a fierce retreating battle at the coastline, blue goblins came out of the sea. The group was retreating back to the school campus while maintaining formation with the high-level camp leaders acting as rear guard.

"Blue goblins? Tch, is it Sahuagin? What the hell is going on here?"

Naotsugu cursed and swore, he had never heard of anyone encountering the rare monster Sahuagin in the Sand Leaf peninsula before. They were commonly found in warmer areas further to the south.

"Is this... a coincidence?"

Rezarick was asking about the connection between the goblins and the Sahuagins. Nobody knew the answer, so there was only silence. But the 2 armies seemed to be moving in concert, calling it a coincidence seemed to be dismissing their connection too easily.

Heading to the school campus may not be the best option now, they might be surrounded by both the goblins and the Sahuagins in the worst case scenario.

(If it is too dangerous, we can all use 'Call of Home' to teleport back to Akiba.)

Naotsugu convinced himself.

They could go back to Akiba easily if they used 'Call of Home', but they would need a few days to come to Sand Leaf peninsula. Hence, this was the last resort if they ran out of options.

Leading the beginners back to the school campus was also risky.

But Naotsugu thought that they should link up with Maryele's group since they were on their way there. They could account for everyone's safety this way, which was the top priority.

Nyanta and Rezarick agreed with this plan.

With the decision made, executing it was very fast.

Since there was no way of knowing when the goblin army was coming, there was no point in staying here.

According to Nyanta's description, the goblin groups were spread around the forest area, scouting out a wide area. Even if they triggered a battle, they could just force their way through.

"Alright, we will be returning to the school campus next, Me, Nyanta and Rezarick will be the leading party. Even with just the 3 of us, we won't lose to you rookies, so don't worry understand? Okay! The higher-level party will be in the rear, remember to do your part, pay attention to the back but don't stay too far behind. The lower-level party will be in the middle in charge of supporting us if we run into a fight in front, don't drop your guard because you are in the center!"

The group mounted their horses under Naotsugu's command.

They intended to cut across the Sand Leaf hills in a straight line.

...There was going to be a war.

Naotsugu worryingly acknowledged this fact, the goblins and Sahuagins might have surrounded the entire Sand Leaf by now.

If that was the case, his reliable friend would initiate some form of counteraction rising against the monsters' attack. He just needed to do his part.

Naotsugu stroked the neck of his horse gently and advanced along the forest trail.

Part 2

Moving the time forward a little.

Shiroe who received the report from Naotsugu knew about the unsteady air surrounding the Sand Leaf peninsula. But he already knew about it earlier during the meeting with the lords of the People of the Land.

Adventurers could communicate with a companion far away via telepathy, the People of the Land also had a form of long range communication.

They held conferences with each other through the use of crystal balls and magic.

When Elder Tales was still a game, the People of the Land were NPCs, a part of the background of the game. They did not have battle abilities and convenient skills provided by the game system like the Adventurers.

But Elder Tales had a fantasy setting, in order to have deeper story elements, the People of the Land were set to be able to use all kinds of magic.

Examples would be the secret skill to create magical artifacts or teleport magic to escape from the main characters (the players).

But this was just a setting, not an existing ability. But in the alternate world after the Catastrophe, these abilities became a part of the magic systems and were used more freely.

Long range conferencing via magic by using crystal balls was part of that magic.

Depending on the time and place, this communication technique was a more powerful weapon than a band of knights. The nobles of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' understood this point, and had a personal court magician reside in their land.

The pillaging goblin tribes only roamed in the mountains and wouldn't attack the cities the nobles reside in. Only the small scale communities in the hills and unfortunate travellers would fall victim to them.

The first to know of the goblin army was Tsukuba's Marquis Kyriva. The goblins were moving in the hills, so they weren't detected until elements of the goblin's advance forces reached Sand Leaf.

This information was transmitted last night.

Tsukuba's resident magician recognized the seriousness of the situation and contacted Marquis Kyriva immediately. Marquis Kyriva only hesitated a moment before calling for an emergency meeting and escalated the news to Duke Sergead. Duke Sergead thought the matter was more important than his pride and requested for aid from all the attending nobles.

The People of the Land held a meeting out of the blue, so they were in a state of confusion. The goblin army was terrifying in its numbers and this incident was severe enough to impact their governance.

The People of the Land held the meeting through the night thinking of countermeasures.

There were several reasons why Krusty and the other Adventurers were not invited to this meeting.

First, Krusty and the group from the Round Table Council were not official members of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' yet.

There would be a ceremony to officially recognize the Round Table Council joining the League during the 10 days meeting, this had already been

scheduled. But the nobles wanted to negotiate as much as possible first, so this ceremony would be held in the latter half of the meeting. But since they had not gone through the ceremony yet, the Round Table Council was not an official member of the League right now.

Second, there were still some members of the League who felt uneasy about the Round Table Council. There were even rumors 'Is the goblin invasion a scheme of the Adventurers?' that were totally, laughably silly.

This type of view came from a fact. The goblin tribes in the Ouyu Hills had always been a headache for the residents in the mountains. But in the past 80 years, they had not come out of the mountains to invade the villages. Even though the residents thought of them as dangerous elements in the hills and feel uneasy, there was no big issue if they live at the foot of the mountain.

The reason the goblins were held at bay in the mountain was because the Adventurers periodically raided them and cut down their numbers.

The nobles residing around the Ouyu mountain ridges knew the importance of inviting Adventurers to diminish the strength of the goblins, so they would put out many quests and rewards annually.

When Elder Tales was still a game, the nobles would use the bar to disseminate quests to 'raid goblins', 'attack the goblin village', 'recover the stolen resources', and the Adventurers would take on the quests for the rewards and make their way up the mountains.

But it was different this year, the Adventurers ignored all the quests related to the goblins in Ouyu mountain. That was why the nobles of the League, especially those situated near the Ouya mountain ridges, suggested it might be a conspiracy of the Adventurers.

But that was not the case.

The event known as the 'May Incident' to the People of the Land, and Catastrophe to the Adventurers, changed the world. The Adventurers also changed to adapt to this new world, living every day with no energy to spare. Compared to the time when Elder Tales was just a game, all kinds of quests were ignored, this was something that couldn't be helped.

The Adventurers did not have any ill intentions, they were just prioritizing on solving their own problems, that's why they were ignoring the goblins. This was common knowledge spread among the People of the Land. But when the monster army started to invade, the nobles were unable to accept this idea emotionally.

And also...

"So, is it true?"

"Yes, the 'Knights of Izumo'... disappeared."

"They are no longer here? Meaning they were destroyed?"

"We do not know if they were destroyed, there are no bodies or any traces of battles, they are just gone, 'spirited away' would be the best way to say it."

They acknowledged this fact once again.

The 'Knights of Izumo' was one of the 'Global 13 Orders of Knights', the strongest military force of the kind human race, the protector of the world. There was an unbelievable type of superhuman known as 'Ancient' in this world. They were made with lost ancient magic hidden in the bloodlines of the People of the Land, a miraculous people.

The 'Global 13 Orders of Knights' were a league of superheroes exclusively made up of 'Ancients'.

They were the saviors of humanity and would not interfere with the squabbles of the nobles or appear when demihumans attacked in small scale. But they would definitely strike during big-scale disasters to protect the human world.

Those 'Knights of Izumo' disappeared.

This fact was known one month after the 'May Incident', because it was a serious matter, the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' classified this information from the public. They suspected this might be the conspiracy of the 'Holy Empire Westelande', but their spies reported that the 'Holy Empire Westelande' was also troubled by this.

The nobles only knew in detail about the 'Knights of Izumo', the other 12 'Global 13 Orders of Knights' must be shouldering the safety of the world on other continents, and had not appeared in Yamato before.

But those 'Knights of Izumo' disappeared.

The several fortresses that were used as their home bases were now empty. From the scout reports, there were no traces of battle there, or any signs of them being activated on short notice for a crusade to some far away lands.

It had a normal, everyday feeling, as if the place were frozen in time.

The impression was similar to taking a walk on a sunny day and not coming back.

"But, if that is so..."

"Woo woo..."

Several nobles scratched their heads.

The goblin army numbered over 10,000. If they formed up on the plains and clashed all-out with the League of Freedom Towns' forces, it was a number they didn't stand a chance against.

But the goblins were moving south along the mountain ridges and there was no way of knowing where they would strike, it might be Hitachi, Fourbridge, or even they might even turn around and hit downtown of Urumiya.

Those cities were different from others in the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal', they had city walls protecting the nobles' residences and the entire city area, they were fortress cities. Depending on the number of soldiers and citizens, they could protect themselves against a larger force if they adopted a defensive strategy. But if they were facing goblins that were over 10,000 in number, they might not be able to do it alone. They would face the problem of resource supplies and psychological shock.

These cities were dependent on the aid of 'The Knights of Izumo'.

The city in the most dire position was Tsukuba.

There were sightings of the goblin invasion forces in the mountains, and they were estimated to be less than a hundred km away.

Other than this, the possible targets of the goblins were the aforementioned Hitachi, Fourbridge, downtown of Urumiya, and the unarmed fishing town Choshi that was not under any noble's jurisdiction.

They might target...

"They might be targeting Maihama."

Duke Sergead said as he put his strong rugged palm on his cheek.

From the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice' in the direction of Sand Leaf, Maihama was on the other side of the city ruins of Eastal. Calculating from the place the goblins were sighted, they might attack the city in 2-3 days in the worst case scenario.

In conclusion, the goblin army was heading straight for the throats of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'. From the perspective of the League, they should say that they allowed the enemy to penetrate so deep into their territory.

The monsters were too close, there was no way to remove this thorn without spilling blood and the venom was about to corrode the heart of the League.

A deafening silence descended on the room.

It was an unbearable silence.

The night meeting continued with heavy words, from a rational point of view, the enemy was just days away from invading any number of cities, this was not the time for meetings.

Since it had come to this, the only way was for the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' to pool their forces to surround and exterminate the goblin army.

But this would require a lot of sacrifices. Cavalry would not be able to fight in the forest with limited visibility, the heavy cavalry which relied on their charges to take down the enemy would not be able to show their might.

It was difficult to run a large scale war, the nobles' forces would be spread out, fighting the goblins would cost many lives. The hill regions were suitable for hiding, even if you sent in all your forces to this extent, the goblins might spread out and run away, there was no guarantee you could take them all out.

And so, should the lords all return and defend their own lands? The answer was no.

Most cities were able to survive a siege for months, but as the goblins attacked the fortress, they could raid the surrounding villages and communities, destroying the farms and hide in the hills when reinforcements came to save the city. Their motives were food and treasures, not to occupy the city. Thinking about it this way, they were not an army, but armed refugees.

The mountain ranges in the northeast region of the Yamato archipelago faced a serious problem. A big coalition like an army was unable to cooperate and support each other in this type of terrain.

Duke Sergead pressed his aching temple with his fingers and thought.

(The decision of this meeting is probably going to be using all forces to surround and destroy the enemy... We can only accept the fact we will lose a lot of men in this war of attrition... But the problem in this case is which noble will lead the vanguard.)

Leading the vanguard sounded like a honorable role, but they were actually going to be cannon fodder.

...First of all, a certain fortress city would be surrounded and besieged. This fortress would need to strengthen its defense to resist the goblins. The goblins would tire from laying siege, and the League's army would surround and destroy them.

This was a proper war strategy in military terms.

And it was probably the only way to destroy the goblins. But this strategy needed a city fortress to be the bait.

The candidates were first Tsukaba, followed by Duke Sergead's city Maihama.

All the nobles understood this.

But they dared not say it.

For a city to be under siege meant accepting all the farms and fields they had tilled would be razed to the ground and many citizens' lives would be lost. 'Be the bait' were not words you could utter easily.

"...We...We request under the charter of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' for help from the lords in the League!"

Tsukaba's Marquis Kyriva uttered these words like a scream.

But facing a plea like this, many of the nobles just averted their eyes in silence.

"That...That's right, Akiba! There is Akiba, they can use their army to defeat the goblins, we should do that! They are the reason for all this after all!"

Marquis Kyriva shouted desperately as though he was going to be crushed by the silence. These words piqued the interest of some of the nobles.

(Ehmm...)

Duke Sergead's expression was serious, but he kept silent and thought.

This was a good idea.

They had been thinking about it with the current strength of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal', they had not considered adding elements from outside...that element was the Adventurers in Akiba, if it were them, they could provide some effective countermeasures.

(But...)

They were a strong weapon of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal', but they might also be a double-edged sword, there was no guarantee they could control this weapon.

Could we request for aid just like that? But if we seek help, we would need to tell them all the truth, including the disappearance of the 'Knights of Izumo'.

Adventurers were very strong.

If they put their minds to it and declared war on the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal', it would be more complex than this war with the goblins. The 'Knights of Izumo' that could rival the Adventurers were now gone, if the Adventurers knew about this, they could not predict how the dynamics of the situation would evolve.

Duke Sergead thought the 3 young ambassadors could be trusted.

Michitaka had the air of a great merchant, he was highly tolerant and was willing to bear any losses to stay true to his business ethics.

Shiroe had the feel of a scholar, but his nature was like a sharp sword. If the sword was out of the sheath, no matter how challenging the problem was, he would cut it down.

And Krusty, senate leader of the Round Table Council was not a knight. He was talented in too many ways, a knight was not enough to describe him. The potential of this young man Krusty could not be gauged, even with the eyes of the 60 years-old Duke, it was like an opaque curtain.

But the personal feelings of Sergead had to be strictly separated from the decision-making of Duke Sergead Corwen, ruler of Maihama, the most prestigious clan Corwen in the east and the chairman of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'. The nature of the 3 ambassadors also could not be used to gauge the political decisions of Akiba.

(And the Holy Empire Westelande is watching this closely...)

With Marquis Kyriva leading the way, several nobles wanted the Adventurers to take to the battlefield. A few lords brought up the 'Knights of Izumo' incident, suggesting that keeping secrets from allies was not appropriate.

But even more nobles questioned the feasibility of the strategy, the Adventurers joining the fray was a good thing, but how do you lure these Adventurers in? If the nobles did not provide quest rewards to match, it would be hard to entice them.

The meeting turned into chaos.

And it continued to be this way when Nyanta reported the situation to Shiroe the following day.

Part 3

The morning after the noble's meeting.

The telepathy message from Sand Leaf alerted Shiroe's group to the crisis.

Nyanta might not be the first to report, because Michitaka and Krusty also received similar messages from guild members attending the summer training camp at about the same time.

Sand Leaf peninsula was under a large-scale attack from demihumans.

Shiroe's group held an emergency meeting in their room immediately. The meeting room only had Shiroe, Michitaka, Krusty, and a few others, the rest were either on security detail or out scouting for intelligence.

At the same time, the top floor of the guild building in Akiba was also having an emergency meeting at the Round Table. Even though it was inconvenient, they still managed to hold a meeting through telepathy.

"Let's explain the situation."

At Michitaka's request, Shiroe took out his notes and informed the others of the known facts.

"Sand Leaf peninsula was under attack by demihumans earlier this morning. Including the beginners, there are 67 players from Akiba attending a summer training camp in the peninsula. The invading demihuman armies are as follows. Sahuagin at the coastline, unknown numbers, estimated to be at least a few hundred; central hill region is attacked by large-scale pillaging goblin tribes, at least 10,000 in strength."

10,000 was easy to say, but was a large number, even the veteran players would be daunted by this.

Elder Tales' smallest group battle unit was a 'Party'. This was a group cooperating together using tactics, a maximum of 6 members. When challenging dungeons or adventuring in the world, the Adventurers of Elder Tales would form a 'Party'.

But there were some incidents and quests that could not be handled by a party. To handle such large-scale battles, Elder Tales' design had a big scale battle system called a 'Raid'.

'Raid' was separated into levels, the more common one being the 'Full Raid' formed by 4 'Parties', a 24-player mid-sized group. Elder Tales' heroic-level battles were normally done in this way.

The quest which the Debauchery Tea Party completed to obtain their griffon flutes, 'The Fields of Dead Spirits,' required a 24-man group and was a 'Full Raid' quest.

There was another higher level group, which was the 'Legion Raid' formed by 4 'Full Raid' groups. There were very few quests in Elder Tales that were 'Legion Raid' level, and were used to handle very large-scale, limited time events to avert national-level crises.

It was hard to work together in an army of 96 people, most players wouldn't be able to grasp the full extent of the battle, the commander must have courage, insight, and tactical ability.

Goblin levels were low.

To level 90 players, they were just small fries and they could take on dozens alone. But no one had heard of an army that was a hundred times bigger than the 96-man 'Legion Raid'.

"This is a conservative estimate, I think the actual numbers will need to be revised upwards."

"Why do you think so?"

Krusty asked Shiroe.

"It's based on the reason for the invasion."

"Reason? Do you know what it is?"

Everybody was talking through telepathy, the minutes were taken by one of the attendants that came along. These words should be from Soujirou of West Wind Brigade, and Shiroe replied 'this is not a confirmed fact, just my own deduction' as a opening line, and said:

"I think the reason for the invasion is 'The Return of the Goblin King'."

Shiroe not only made the meeting room he was in quiet, the Round Table Council members in Akiba and Maryele in Sand Leaf were also dumbstruck.

When Elder Tales was just a game, 'The Return of the Goblin King' was a periodic game event.

In the depths of the Ouyu zone's 'Black Forest' there was the goblin castle, 'Seven Falls'.

Every 2 years there would be a goblin king coronation ceremony, crowning the strongest goblin tribe leader from the surrounding 6 tribes.

If you changed it to real time, this was an event that happens every 2 months. The entrance to the 'Seven Falls' would open every 2 months for a week. If the players raided the goblin king's fortress during this period, they would be able to obtain strong loot.

There were 2 reasons why this was so popular. First, the loot dropped by the goblin king was very strong, even if they were not something the top-tier players of major guilds would want, they were still very high level items for normal players, high quality items that would make others envious.

Another reason that could not be overlooked was the strength of the goblin king and the defense forces were not fixed.

According to the game setting, the goblin king was selected from the strong goblins from the surrounding tribes. In other words, if you attacked the surrounding tribes and weakened their forces, the goblins in the 'Seven Falls' zone would also be weakened, the level and power of the goblin king would also go down.

Because of this feature, even normal players stood a chance in taking on 'The Return of the Goblin King' quest, making it a worthwhile and popular quest.

"...Yes, 'The Return of the Goblin King' that everyone is familiar with. It has a setting that has never happened before and might be forgotten by the players."

Raiding the goblin king was a 'Full Raid' level battle, but if you weakened the goblins beforehand, it was not too difficult, a raid suitable for mid-size guilds to take on. Shiroe had never heard of a goblin king living past the 1 week event period.

But if Shiroe remembered correctly, this was what was happening right now.

"I remember...If the goblin king survives the 1 week event period, he will unite the surrounding tribes and his army will increase by 10 times, I remember there is such an explanation, right?"

Shiroe nodded to acknowledge Michitaka's query.

That was correct.

The goblin king who completed the coronation would become the hero of the goblins, his influence would increase significantly.

After the Catastrophe, Shiroe and the adventurers had been busy building their environment to survive in this alternate world. Even if it was Elder Tales' popular quest 'The Return of the Goblin King', they didn't have the time to take on the quest and ignored it.

"So the goblins retained their military power."

An attendant relayed the telepathy message, Shiroe thought for a while, nodded, and replied.

"Yes, we did not raid the 6 surrounding tribes, and did not attack the fortress of Seven Falls in waves, so we can assume the goblin king and his guards' levels are at their highest in the history of the game... Other than this, I am more worried about the scale of the united goblin tribes."

There was a suffocating silence in the meeting room.

They did not want to keep quiet but with nothing constructive to say, the room became silent.

They maintained a sense of calm and did not fall into panic. According to reports, the summer training camp attendees were seeking refuge in the abandoned school campus, Maryele from Crescent Moon Alliance was joining the meeting through telepathy from there.

Telepathy could only connect 1-to-1, so Henrietta was relaying Maryele's messages in the meeting room.

Also, if the campers were surrounded by powerful monsters, they would use 'Call of Home' to teleport back to Akiba to avoid harm.

The goblin army was marching from the Sand Leaf peninsula, they should be heading towards either the west or south, razing any communities in their way. But Akiba was still a distance away, and Akiba would be ready for them if they did come.

Even if the goblin army was the biggest ever, they were still a manageable group. You needed a 'Full Raid' group to raid the goblin king... 24 Adventurers. Akiba had 500 times that number of Adventurers.

(But the situation now...)

Akiba was safe, but the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' could not take matters lightly like them.

Even if the enemy numbered just 10,000, Shiroe thought it would be enough to take down a weaker fortress.

Shiroe lacked military knowledge, so it was a shame that he could not be certain about that. But he could imagine the livid faces of the nobles in the League.

"Will the 'Knights of Izumo' be deploying?"

Henrietta asked hesitantly.

This was answered with a chatter of voices agreeing "Oh..." "Now that you mention it..."

The 'Knights of Izumo'.

This was an order of knights in the Japanese server made up of 'Ancients'.

An 'Ancient' was a hero character of the People of the Land, their might was more than a match for the Adventurers, the ace in the hole for the kind human race. When Adventurers first appeared in this world, they took on quests and missions to tip the scale against the demihumans with their overwhelming numbers. But if the fate of the world hanged in the balance, the 'Knights of Izumo' intervened.

In the 12 open servers of the world there were 13 such orders of knights, the 'Knights of Izumo' were known as the Japanese server's... wrong, it should be Yamato archipelago's guardian angels.

When Elder Tales was still a game, Shiroe heard of the exploits of this order of knights. Not only Shiroe, the more experienced players would know even more about the legends of this mythical knight order. They fought frequently alongside them in quests or followed their traces in their crusades.

They were the protectors of all of the kind human race in the world, so they would not involve themselves in the petty political quarrels between the lords and nobles. But if an event like the invasion of the demihumans were to happen, they probably would take some action.

The meeting had the atmosphere of 'I don't need to take care of this personally'. But Shiroe had his doubts, as they had not confirmed that the 'Knights of Izumo' were operating normally as usual.

Shiroe fell into a feeling of self-loathing, thinking that he was worrying about this too much. He was interested in the southwards march of the goblins, recalling that the Elder Tales official setting only said 'the goblin king who survives the week of his coronation will unite the surrounding forces and build an empire'.

(...Can we really leave this alone?)

Shiroe did not have a clear answer in his heart. The fact was that he had to worry about the 'Spirit Theory' issue, making him hesitate about starting a grand-scale war.

Part 4

"Princess, princess... Princess Raynesia?"

The maid's call made Raynesia turn around.

"What is it...?"

Raynesia tilted her head slightly up, the knights of the court would be mesmerized by just this look and swear their eternal fealty to her, that was how adorable and beautiful she was. But the one before her was the maid that had been taking care of her for the longest time.

"Thinking about something? It is still too early to think about lunch, right?"

The maid said in an overly familiar tone.

But her accusation was quite generous, 'thinking' was a rare action that Raynesia took. The time she spent looking 'depressed' was longer than the time she spent thinking. But her most common action was just 'dazing around'.

"Eh? Elissa, do I look like I am thinking?"

Raynesia was probably used to it and did not make any rebuttal, and just made a query.

The maid Elissa made her way to the back of Raynesia who was sitting at the dressing table to comb her beautiful silver hair.

"Yes, you look like you were thinking, which is so rare for the princess."

This made Raynesia think in silence again, this was a rare sight indeed.

The key of differentiating her actions was in her gaze. When she was looking slightly down and not displaying any emotions, she was 'thinking'.

If she looked to the bottom left and looked like she was smiling despite being troubled, she was 'depressed'. If the princess was fretting and depressed over small matters, this was the expression she made.

This was the truth behind the face the scholars and bureaucrats praised as 'sorrowful look of the melancholic beauty'. The things she was fretting about were usually stuff like 'did I eat too much last night?' or 'I hope they don't throw away my old pajamas'.

The expression popular with the knights and muscular men was the 'dazing around' expression. Her head tilted slightly upwards, a tipsy look as if she was daydreaming, with a faint hint of a smile. If she was dazing too much, her eyes would shine, making her even more alluring.

Since she was just dazing around, if you asked her you would realize she was not thinking about anything, the most she would say would be something on the level of 'Ah, the weather is nice' or 'I want to take a nap in my room'. She sounded like an idiot when she said that, and from what

Elissa saw, the Raynesia she was serving under was a real idiot, there was no mistake.

At least that was so for their daily lives.

(This is hard, beauties are hard to handle.)

Elissa could only sigh.

Since Elissa was a maid serving the princess, she was also quite a beauty herself. If she had some time off and walked in the city, there would be tons of men hitting on her.

From Elissa's view, she was a pretty charming woman, but to the standard of a fancy beauty. Real beauties were ladies like Raynesia, a beauty at this level had the ability to be independent of the person herself, letting others ignore things like her personality and thoughts, a whole dimension by itself.

(I don't really envy her though.)

Elissa sighed softly as she combed the princess' luscious and silvery hair, each strand passing through her fingers was like a treasure as valuable as gold.

"...Didn't come today."

Elisa wanted to tease the princess and said.

"Ah?"

"Krusty-sama."

"...Why did you ask?"

"It is nothing, the two of you kept having lunch together recently, he usually comes to visit the princess around this time."

"Is...that so..."

Raynesia replied in a mildly panicky tone. The slightly embarrassed Raynesia was not the princess the knights adored.

This princess was a beauty, but she was closer to being naive and clumsy instead of a fancy lady... she was just a useless girl, but Elissa admired her useless mistress.

"Yeah, that is correct. The animal known as man doesn't pay attention to details since the start of civilization. We are having a hard time with just the clothes we brought along, but he never cares about our problems with our wardrobes, it is really making me speechless... I remember lunch yesterday was a pearl-color gown, light purple shawl and purple crystal necklace. The day before was light purple rose satin... right, the one with the double layer material."

"Yeah."

Raynesia had a surprised expression, from the look she was giving Elissa through the mirror, she didn't understand what she was saying.

"Listen carefully princess, this is not 'Castle Cinderella' in Maihama, so your wardrobe is very limited. If you have lunch with a specific male continuously, there is a limit to the combination of clothes you can wear. Since it is lunch, you cannot wear dresses for dinner banquets, you need to pay attention to the amount of skin you show. If lunch is in the courtyard, you will need to wear matching sleeve designs, and you need to choose according to the wallpaper color if you are eating indoors..."

Raynesia digested these words for a while, then gingerly expressed her views.

"I am fine with yesterday's clothes."

"No way, wearing the same clothes for meals 2 days in a row, you think you are a country girl?"

Elissa rejected Raynesia's suggestion.

"I can wear the long sleeve silk blouse and plaid skirt..."

"That is indoor casual wear! And this is the specific costume you always laze around in!"

Facing the aggressive Elissa, Raynesia made a puppy face and kept quiet. Even this expression looked like she was hiding her sorrows, bearing her painful troubles, beauties were terrifying.

(But her nature is a useless bum, things like plaid skirts are not meant to be seen by men, she is not a bar hostess!)

"But I don't think that person is concerned about these things..."

"Wrong! The animal known as man may say he doesn't mind, but he will tabulate the scores in his heart, it must be like this. They will say 'I like your most natural look', but when they see a woman who just woke up they will turn their gaze far away. What they need is not 'most natural look', but your 'seemingly most natural look'! Listen, in the end the princess..."

The sound of the knocking door interrupted Elissa's spirited lecture.

Raynesia's father Feynail entered with the butler without waiting for their reply.

"Ah, Raynesia, calm down and listen to me."

Feynail tried to hide his exasperation, took a glass of water, and drank half of it before continuing.

"A goblin army is heading towards Maihama, 10,000 in strength and seems to be increasing. They might number tens of thousands in a few days, but that is the worse case scenario."

Elissa was unable to get what he was saying.

10 times of a hundred was a thousand, 10 times that was ten thousand.

The city of Maihama had the largest population within the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal', numbering about 20,000 which included the farmers and merchants. The military might of Maihama included a thousand guards that maintained peace and order in the city, the 400 knights stationed in Maihama, and if you added in other patrolling knights, it would barely reach 2000.

When Elissa realized it, she felt her blood draining away in an instant.

10,000 enemy troops!

The enemy were demihumans, so the civilian militia wouldn't be able to match up to them. Elissa heard about defense battle using a fortress, but 10,000 against 2000 sounded like a lost cause to a woman with no military knowledge.

"Those ugly bastards might not be after our precious Maihama, Tsukaba and a few other nobles' territories are also in the danger zone. But we

cannot afford to let down our guard, I plan to return to Maihama immediately."

"Dear Father, I will also..."

Raynesia got up from her chair.

She had a sharp and serious expression.

Raynesia might not be good at socializing with others, was lazy, loved to daze around, and didn't look like a daughter of a prestigious clan.

But just because she didn't act like one, it didn't mean she was not suitable to be one.

This sloppy and careless princess had the bloodline of one of the only two duke clans... Clan Corwen. Elissa had never doubted that the princess she was taking care of was of noble birth and had high potential.

"No, there is no need, you can just stay here."

"Why? With our land in danger, we need to all go back..."

"No, Father-in-law will also stay here."

Father-in-law referred to the current head of the family, Duke Sergead. Raynesia's mother Sarariya was the daughter of Sergead, her father married into the clan.

"We have not determined the true intention of the invading army, from the scale, they are not only after Maihama. It won't be too serious if they only attack Maihama... the worse case will be the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' being wiped off the face of the map. To counter this, the League will need to unite to face our adversaries together. As the chairman of the League, Father-in-law cannot leave this palace. You need to become his pillar of support... Do you understand?"

Feynail came just to say these words.

He did not wait for his daughter to reply and hastily left the room, Elissa bowed deeply to bid him farewell.

Feynail was Elissa's main employer. Compared to her times with Raynesia or her mother, Elissa had little contact with her employer, and he gave her an impression of being a honest man.

The lord of Maihama was Duke Sergead.

He inherited his role at a young age and was brilliant in his governance, enjoyed a good reputation, and was loved by his people. His daughter and granddaughter Raynesia were also very well-liked.

Compared to direct bloodline descendants, his son-in-law Feynail was like an outsider. Even though saying it this way sounded wrong, but he could not avoid the criticism of leaving a weak impression on the people.

He was not a knight or the son of a noble, he was just a bureaucrat with a normal background. He was in the economic department and rose in rank over time. Elissa heard from her parents when Feynail was marrying into the clan, the people were not really disappointed, but just had the feeling of missed expectations.

But you could not feel the gentleness of his bureaucratic background when you looked at his back as he rushed back to his land without hesitation. If he was really so frail and weak, Sergead would not have approved of him, and Elissa agreed with the Duke's judgement.

"Dear father..."

"Princess?"

Raynesia's whimper made Elissa focus on her.

Raynesia was thinking.

No, this was different from the normal-thinking Raynesia she had seen so far.

Her eyes seemed to be looking at something without form and shape, nursing a flame that was burning slowly. Her graceful stance had an air of nobility, you could not jokingly describe it as being depressed.

"Princess...?"

Raynesia did not hear Elissa's words and bit her lips gently.

Part 5

This was Sand Leaf peninsula, an abandoned school grounds on a gentle hill near the sea. There were many Adventurers gathered on the field.

They were all chatting among themselves with tense expressions. They were not a formal army, so there were no officers nagging at them and asking them to form up and behave. They gathered in small groups with people they were familiar with or at about the same level and were awaiting orders.

No one made any suggestions, but the Adventurers had already accounted for all their things and packed them away. There were several wooden barrels in the central tent, someone would help you refill your water bottles with ice cold black rose tea over there.

These should be initiatives taken by the campers, the Adventurers that had taken the tea would return to their companions and continue to talk softly.

In the sky to the west, the sun which looked bigger than it was during the day was setting, it was already evening.

Adventurers kept entering and leaving the only tent left in the center of the field.

Following the guideline that was announced, they would be using this campus as a base until they had accounted for everyone. This also meant that they would be leaving after making sure everybody was safe.

Maryele looked outside the tent and sighed.

Nyanta, Naotsugu, Maryele, Shouryuu, Rezarick, and other level 90 players were holding a meeting in the tent.

The supervisor for this summer training camp was Maryele, Crescent Moon Alliance was a small guild, but it was one of the 11 guilds that set up the Round Table Council. The other members of the council were either at the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice', or were back in Akiba, so the training of the beginners was left in Maryele's care.

The news of the Sahuagin and goblin attacks had already been reported back to the Round Table Council, they must be coming up with some follow-up measures.

"Mary-san? Don't think too hard about it, just leave it to Shiro and Henrietta-san, alright? Don't worry, be it through tricks or treachery, they will think of a good way to deal with this."

"Thanks, Naotsugu-yan."

Maryele smiled brilliantly like usual.

She thought that smiling in this situation was not too good, but feeling the sincerity of others made her happy. This youth Naotsugu... That didn't sound right, he was only a year or two younger, he should be an adult ... He was usually so brash and bold, so it was hard to imagine that he was actually delicate and kind at heart. When Maryele noticed this, she was always delighted when he showed his concern.

"Alright! Let me give you a hug! A hug as thanks!"

Maryele hid her embarrassment and hugged the panicky Naotsugu tightly, Naotsugu with his red face and helpless demeanor was so cute and interesting.

"Eh! Wait, Mary-san, don't do that! Stop...Swimsuit...Touching...!"

Naostugu whose mind was in total chaos surprised Maryele, but she continued to hug Naotsugu's head as Nyanta intervened with his kind words.

"Maryele-cchi? I think you should change your clothes nya, it is already evening. cough cough, about that... just wearing a bikini and a hoodie is a bit too stimulating for Naotsugu-cchi nya."

This advice made Maryele realize the situation and she backed away hastily.

She was so nervous all the while and did not notice she was essentially half naked.

(Heavens... that was careless of me, I am wearing this when I... Boo hoo... Now he will think of me as a brainless girl. Thankfully Henrietta is not here, or she would give me a lecture...)

Her chest that was pressing against Naotsugu felt warm, the heat seemed to be coming from her sense of shame, her face had the same warmth. Maryele rushed into the depths of the tents and took out armor to change

into, no one should be able to see her behind the screens. But she did not take off her swimwear, and just wore a tunic and armor over it.

"Sorry to disturb! Players above level 30 are all accounted for! Everyone is present!"

Maryele was changing so she could not see this, but she heard Nyanta accept the report from the camper. Everyone was accounted for, no attendees were lost, Maryele felt a heavy weight was off her shoulders.

The retreating battle from the beach was really fierce.

The enemy level was low, but their numbers were very troublesome. The strategy for long-term battles and short-term battles were different, which was basically the allocation of MP usage.

Cleric Maryele was a healer, and if the healer ran out of MP it meant the supply of healing spells would stop. In order to keep the party members alive, healers needed to manage their MP carefully. In Elder Tales, a normal party raiding a dungeon would get into battles that lasted from 30 seconds to several minutes, so players would find it hard to control their resources for battles that went over 10 minutes.

Only players in major guilds who took part in 'Raids' would have experience in long and pitched battles.

They retreated with much difficulty.

There were people wounded in the battle, but they were cured by the healers. Shouryuu commented that the beginners were now more courageous and spirited after experiencing this retreating fight, so they did gain something out of this.

After Maryele finished changing and tidying her hair, there was a commotion outside the tent. She heard Naotsugu call "Mary-san!" and walk out into the purple night sky. There were many specks of lights wavering in the forest of the distant mountain range.

"...Those are torches nya."

Nya mentioned softly.

This was a scene out of a fantasy, and it was an uneasy and looming sight.

With the red burning sun as the background, Sand Leaf's forest in the mountain was falling into darkness. Countless specks of light shone and moved through the forest, like ants carrying lights and marching forward.

"From the looks of it, 100-150?"

Naotsugu said softly.

The number of torches was not equivalent to the number of goblins, but there were at least that number of goblins moving through the forest, Maryele realized that they were no longer hiding their movements.

The countless specks of light were a wordless warning from the goblins that 'We will attack you next'.

"Bring me the map!"

"Ah, wait a minute, I will use 'Magic Torch'."

The veteran players from 'Keele' and 'West Wind Brigade' were estimating the positions of the goblins on the map. Serara was holding the edge of Nyanta's shirt with unease, while Nyanta studied the maps and the markings, and lifted his head and looked to the southeast.

Nyanta decided to use the griffon to scout from the sky while there was still daylight, he should be the one who was most familiar with the movements of the goblins.

Everyone in the plaza didn't panic when they saw this strange sight. Put simply, since everyone was accounted for, they could hold a camp-closing ceremony in Akiba 15 minutes later. Since they could use 'Call of Home', they did not have the feeling of desperation.

In this world, Adventurers were very strong.

(Anyways, we need to wait for the Round Table Council to make a decision. But since everyone is safe, I should report that to them...)

As Maryele was considering this, Nyanta had a troubled expression as he approached with Serara and Minori. Naotsugu and Rezarick were by Maryele's side. It seemed like Nyanta had something to say to the camp leaders.

"What is it? Did something happen?"

Maryele asked.

"The situation is a bit troubling nya, no, there is no need to be troubled at all, but, eh...."

Nyanta didn't know where to start.



"Something wrong? Chief, just say what is on your mind."

Naotsugu probably noticed Maryele's perplexed face, and directly asked his guild-mate from Log Horizon about it.

"...That group seems to be on their way to assault Choshi nya. It is not the whole army, probably a mid-size splinter group that is responsible for pillaging nya. The main army seems to be situated more to the north nya...In other words, they plan to use Choshi as their granary nya."

"Choshi doesn't have walls."

Minori interjected.

The hands of the middle-school girl were shaking, but she steadied herself forcefully and continued:

"If we don't do something, Choshi won't last the night."

Part 6

"So many...?"

Michitaka kept repeating this like a parrot.

There were 5 people in this meeting room.

D.D.D's leader 'Berserker' Krusty.

West Wind Brigade's harem style guild master Soujirou.

Oceanic Systems' 'Strong Armed' boss Michitaka.

Crescent Moon Alliance's stand-in guild master Henrietta.

And Log Horizon's 'Black Heart Glasses' Shiroe.

The crisis of the sudden attack at Sand Leaf peninsula prompted the Round Table Council to hold a meeting to discuss the situation. Maryele who was leading the training camp in Sand Leaf and Shiroe's group who was meeting with the People of the Land at the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice' were attending through telepathy.

The conclusion of the discussion could be summarized simply, 'Standby'.

They were unable to come to a final conclusion at this current phase, they could only continue to keep communications open, gather more intelligence, and standby while observing how the situation would develop, this was the general feel after the discussion.

But they could not let their guards down and must be ready for anything.

Shiroe made 3 suggestions to the Round Table Council, the first was to strengthen the defense of the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice', there were many nobles gathered here, they needed to ensure their safety. The nobles had their own bodyguards, but the Adventurers felt they were not strong enough.

After the telepathy discussion with the Round Table Council ended, West Wind Brigade was the first to heed Shiroe's call and rushed to the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice'.

The 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice' was situated to the southwest of the ruins of Eastal city, it was unlikely the goblins would attack here, this was a safe zone that didn't need any reinforcements. But the meeting among the nobles was still unclear, from the few ways Shiroe predicted their meeting could go, Shiroe or Krusty might not be able to continue discussions with the People of the Land, so there was a need to send reinforcements from Akiba.

But if a big-scale reinforcement army was to arrive while they were still in the middle of discussion, the People of the Land might view this as an act of hostility. Taking this fact into account, West Wind Brigade was a relatively small guild among them and volunteered to lead the way.

West Wind Brigade made camp a 10 minutes ride away from the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice', and Soujirou entered the palace with a few attendants.

Akiba and Shibuya were the 2 cities closest to the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice' in the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'. If they needed to rush, they could arrive in 2 hours riding a horse, so Soujirou was in position that very evening.

According to reports, it had been confirmed that the goblin army was situated around the root of Sand Leaf peninsula.

Shiroe marked out the rough position on the map, this place was near Abiko and Toride in the real world. They were satellite cities in old Japan, but they were just unexplored and green hill regions here.

"This is their headquarters, they are divided into tribes and coordinating their movements, but their teamwork is not perfect. Even if you can feel they are lead by the goblin king, their command system is still scattered and lacks uniformity. Their range of operations is wide and unregulated, which makes them harder to handle."

Shiroe expressed his views.

By looking at the map you could tell the enemy was within reach of the area under the influence of the abandoned capital city Eastal. If you drew a line between Tsukaba and Maihama, the army was right between them, in a position to disrupt their forces from cooperating.

"Because their movements are erratic, we cannot grasp their actual numbers even after receiving several reports... If the latest air surveillance report is reliable, there are at least 15,000 goblins."

"15,000..."

Henrieta gasped. She was not the guild master of the guild that was a member of the Round Table Council, she was just standing in for Maryele who was away for the summer training camp in Sand Leaf. Hence, she was avoiding speaking out in this discussion, but she couldn't help herself.

"The number is not very threatening."

Soujirou said with a straight face.

"If the enemy has the same number as us, we the Adventurers can take them on one after another. The enemy this time are goblins, even mid-level players should be able to battle 10 rounds, right? I am confident my guild can take out 1,500 of them."

He had a point, but his words were like those of a demon.

"Aye, we might be able to do that, but the meeting with the nobles won't go so smoothly."

Michitaka replied, Soujirou laughed charmingly, scratched his head and said: "You are right."

"As concluded in the telepathy meeting, the Round Table Council will leave the decision in the hands of the ambassador party led by Krusty. Since the goblins are sending an army to attack, the nobles of Eastal should be talking about this, right? So instead of discussing in Akiba, it is more efficient to do that here."

They basically decided to wait and see. But the nobles might ask for their aid, so Akiba shouldn't force their views when talking about countermeasures with them, this was the answer Akiba chose.

In this negotiation, it would be best to give the ambassador on the scene the authority to make decisions, this was the faith the Round Table Council had in their 3 ambassadors.

"Leave it to us, we won't sell Akiba out."

Michitaka laughed softly and promised Soujirou.

Shiroe looked at Krusty.

The big and handsome man with a calm expression was studying the map in silence.

"...the 'Knights of Izumo' are not deploying?"

Shiroe understood the question Krusty asked, and the meaning behind it.

"I think they are involved in some other incident we don't know about like the 'Suzaku Gate's Ghost Festival'."

'Suzaku Gate's Ghost Festival' was a periodic quest like 'The Return of the Goblin King', the quest activating once every 3 months. The story setting was based on the doors of hell opening and the ghosts and spirits roaming the earth.

The difference between the two was that 'The Return of the Goblin King' was situated in the northeast, 'Suzaku Gate's Ghost Festival' happened in the 'Bane of Heian'.

In other words, if there was something similarly happening in the west, the 'Knights of Izumo' might be on their way there to help. Shiroe didn't think this was the case, but he still brought this theory up.

"Yeah..."

Shiroe was unable to tell if Krusty accepted this reasoning, he just crossed his arms and fell into silence again.

(...This might be my chance to tell the truth.)

Shiroe was planning all sorts of things and trying to predict how things will pan out. But he decided this based on a premonition he had.

"I have something else to report."

"Hmmm? Shiroe-dono, what is it?"

"Shiroe-sama...?"

Shiroe waited for all of them to focus on him and said:

"It is about death in this world. We will respawn in the cathedral after dying, so we just assume that by paying the penalty of lost EXP we can revive. This is the setting in Elder Tales, we were too naive to think this is what is happening."

Shiroe's speech made Krusty who was thinking silently lift his head and listen intently.

"According to my sources...This has not been confirmed, but there are risks in dying even in this world, you will not only lose some of your items and a bit of EXP... Death is when our 'Souls', and our 'Essence' are reborn in bodies. At that time we will lose some memories."

The grand and luxurious meeting room was filled with a tense air so strong that you could almost feel it with your fingers.

"How many memories you lose or which part you will lose, I am not sure... But based on my sources, this is how our death system works."

It felt like no one was reacting to what Shiroe said.

After a long period of time, Krusty replied.

"I understand...so, that is the reason behind my memory loss of the old world, I know that now."

"...!"

The group threw their gazes at the calm burly warrior. Krusty remained unfazed even with so many pairs of eyes on him.

"D.D.D is a battle guild, before the revolution in Akiba, we did some live battle training to adapt to this alternate world and I have experienced death several times. I didn't notice it normally, but there is definitely something missing, although I cannot be sure... But I think the memories we have of the old world will selectively be lost.

"Eh, this..."

"So this will happen, hey!"

"Specifically speaking which part? to what extent?"

Henrietta and Michitaka stood up in screams, but Shiroe stopped them and asked Krusty while looking him in the eye.

"I experienced death twice after the Catastrophe, it is hard to say which part of the memories were lost. If the clue about the memory is also gone, it is hard for me to know. But I am sure that the memories I have lost so far are just a small part. The grade-school I studied in, the nickname and face of my good friend in middle- school, my desktop picture, the lyrics of the songs I like... These memories are still here, so judging from my perspective, I did not lose any memories. But I cannot recall the name of my cat, what she looks like...there is a problem with this effect, it is hard to say if this is due to the problem of the soul or I just plainly forgot about her. By the way, I have very good memory, so I deduced the reason I forgot is because of some special reason, and has something to do with us coming into this alternate world, that is about all I can say about this. Information about my name, friends, and relatives seems to be intact, I am not sure if the important memories are protected, or they just happened to not be affected... But if you go by my example, dying a few times would not have much effect, even if you accumulate 10 deaths it will not affect our daily lives."

...even if you accumulated 10 deaths it would not affect your daily life.

Forgetting your cat's name would not cause any serious problems, and wouldn't affect your life in any meaningful way.

But even if it didn't affect your daily life, this was still a stunning revelation.

In some ways, Shiroe's prediction was correct. As he expected, you would only lose some memories when you died, you would not lose everything. Even the subject in question wouldn't really notice the gradual loss of memory, this prediction was correct.

But even so, this fact still hit him hard. You were not losing other things, but your memory of your old world. This would be a news full of impact to the players, not in a rational way but it would instill fear on the instinctual level.

Krusty smiled at the dumbstruck group.

"Don't be so pessimistic, you won't lose your memory if you don't die, also..."

From the corner of Shiroe's eye, he could see Soujirou consoling Henrietta whose face was pale. This harem builder would definitely raise his love points with the girls in this type of situation.

Michitaka stayed still in a daze after saying: "So this will happen..."

For Shiroe, the second half of Krusty's speech that the group did not really listen to was the main point.

Krusty said with determination in a gentle and soft voice.

'... also, if we don't find the meaning behind this, it would mean living is more terrifying than death in both worlds, right?'

Shiroe kept these words in the bottom of his heart.

CHAPTER.



A LAZY, COWARD PRINCESS

〔怠惰で臆病な姫君〕

▶ NAME: RAYNESIA

▶ LEVEL: 12

▶ RACE: HUMAN

▶ CLASS: NOBLE

▶ HP: 909

▶ MP: 455

▶ ITEM 1:
[RING OF WHITE TREE]

A TOY RING MADE FROM THE WHITE TREE, WITH A PALE ROSE STONE ON IT. ALTHOUGH RAYNESIA CANNOT WEAR THIS IN AMONGST NOBLE SOCIAL CIRCLES, IT IS HER FAVORITE. THERE IS REASON TO BE CAUTIOUS THIS HAS BEEN HANDED DOWN FOR GENERATION FROM MOTHER TO DAUGHTER.



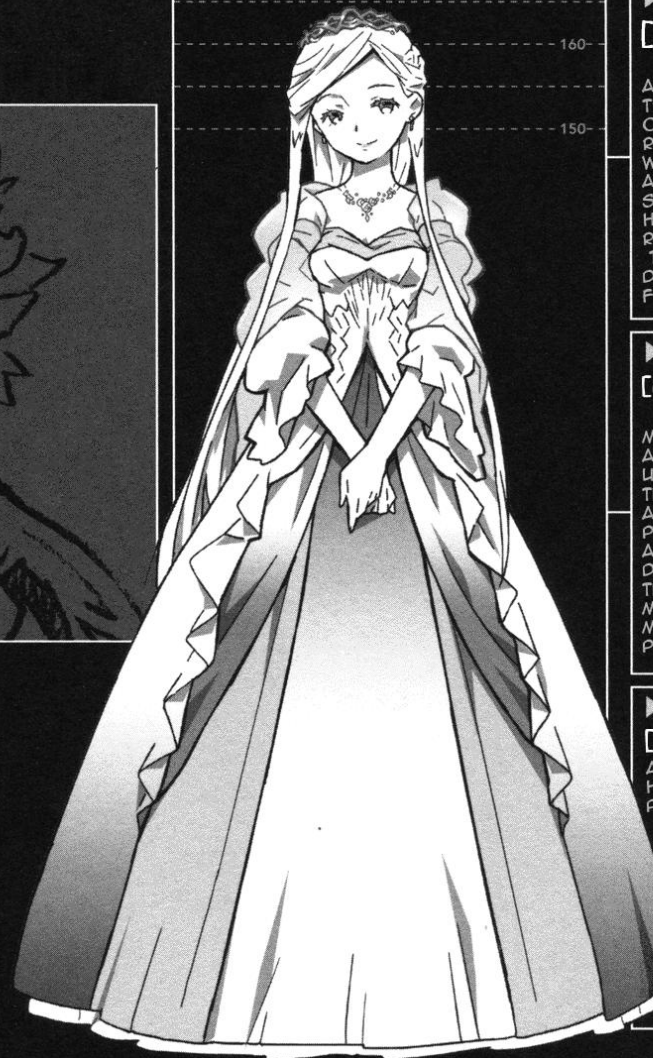
▶ ITEM 2:
[CRYSTAL TONE MUSIC BOX]

MUSIC BOX MADE OF MITHRIL DISCS AND CRYSTAL BLADES. IT USED TO MOVE THROUGH THE MAGIC OF THE ALV'S, BUT THAT POWER WAS LOST ALONG WITH THEIR DESTRUCTION. BY TURNING THE MECHANISMS MANUALLY, ONE CAN PLAY SONGS OF THE PAST.



▶ ITEM 3:
[ROSE BLOSSOM DRESS]

A BEAUTIFUL LIGHT PINK DRESS HEMMED TO LOOK LIKE ROSE PETALS. THE COLORS OF EACH PIECE OF CLOTH ARE SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT AND CATCHES THE EYES AT EVERY ANGLE. ALSO, THE COMFORT OF THE WEARER WAS NOT CONSIDERED AT ALL.



Name: Raynesia

Level: 12

Race: Human

Class: Noble

HP: 909

MP: 455 Equipment

Ring of White Tree
A toy ring made from a white tree, with a pale rose stone on it. Although Raynesia cannot wear this amongst noble social circles, it is her favorite. There is reason to be cautious. This has been handed down for generation from mother to daughter.

Crystal Tone Music Box
Music box made of mithril discs and crystal blades. It used to move through the magic of the Alv's, but that power was lost with their destruction. By turning the mechanisms manually, one can play songs of the past.

Rose Blossom Dress
A beautiful light pink dress hemmed to look like rose petals. The colors of each piece of cloth are slightly different and catches the eyes at every angle. Also, the comfort of the wearer was not considered at all.

Chapter 2: A lazy and cowardly princess

Part 1

The group made preparations hastily.

This was the abandoned school campus in Sand Leaf peninsula, the only Round Table Council member present... Crescent Moon Alliance's Maryele made a passive decision.

They were to move in the direction of Choshi.

These Adventurers had no motivational factor driving them to protect a town belonging to the People of the Land. But if they left them alone in this moment of crisis, it would become an uncomfortable memory.

They needed to at least warn Choshi about this... based on this judgement, the group would be heading there for now.

But there was a party that was moving independently from this decision.

It was Tohya's 5-man party.

They finished preparations early and were the first among the summer training camp groups to head towards Choshi. The streets seemed to be safe for now, but Tohya's party had to stay alert. They were currently keeping a further distance away from each other compared to when they were in the dungeon, moving in high alert formation through the fields.

Rundelhous conjured 'magic light', illuminating the surroundings more than a torch. But in the untamed lands of the alternate world, the darkness seemed impenetrable after nightfall.

"What about there?"

Tohya said every time he saw a building by the river. The party would act depending on the situation, either shouting loudly or sending Isuzu to check the buildings alone.

If the People of the Land were still in the building for some reason, they might lose their lives easily if they were attacked by Sahuagin or goblins. Tohya thought these people had to seek refuge in Choshi for the night, and they were checking the houses out of their own initiative.

"Hello...! Is anyone there...?"

Tohya shouted towards the house then turned towards Isuzu. She shook her head in silence. Seems like nobody was there, so there should be no problem. After Tohya's party confirmed this, they continued towards Choshi.

"Everyone seems to have evacuated."

"Yeah."

Minori answered Isuzu.

Tohya scanned the area around them carefully while listening to their conversation.

There were no signs of goblins in this farm that was near the coastline. But it was close to the sea, no one knew when the Sahuagin would jump out from the darkness.

The party split their attention in all directions and moved on slowly.

... In the evening, Tohya saw countless specks of lights on the hills from the school campus, understanding the gravity of the situation and steeled himself. They might be involved in battles from now on, Nyanta, Naotsugu, and Maryele were conversing in a low voice. There were obvious feelings of fear, but there was a strong sense of nervousness in the air.

Tohya crossed his arms and looked at the goblins' congregation in the distance. His sister Minori came over.

(Is something wrong with Minori?)

Tohya was shocked.

From what Tohya knew, Minori had never been so pale as she bit her lips tightly. Minori looked around her, then said to Tohya unhesitatingly.

"Let's get ready to go, I think we should head to Choshi... I need to speak to Nyanta-san again, please help me convince everyone Tohya."

Minori turned and left Tohya with these words.

Tohya seemed to be driven by the way his sister said these words, and started to gather his comrades. They wanted to be the first among the

summer training camp to head for Choshi. If you considered the facts you could see that this was a highly risky move, the advance party would have a high chance of encountering monsters.

He thought some of his comrades would object to this, but unexpectedly, he was able to convince them in a very short time. Only Serara was a bit hesitant, but she agreed after Isuzu pleaded with her.

Speaking of unexpected events, he didn't think that Isuzu would be so supportive of this plan.

Tohya was so calm that he surprised himself, accepting the situation with a high level of concentration. He was not doing this solely for Minori's sake; even if they were People of the Land, Tohya could not allow himself to leave the defenseless townsfolk behind.

(If we don't do something, the town will be destroyed by the goblins in a blink of an eye...)

Tohya learned the details about the life in the town from Minori, and thought of Choshi as a kind and open town for the fisherman. Choshi was in Sand Leaf peninsula and was not a fortress city or under the jurisdiction of any nobles, they might be able to form militias, but they wouldn't have military might comparable to an order of knights. But with the influence of Maihama and Tsukuba, they had maintained relatively peaceful lives in this fishing town.

With the flow of the Sand Leaf River nearby, the plains nearby were fertile and relatively flat.

The closer the land was to Choshi, the faster they were irrigated. The farm plots were squared and shaped like bricks, with wheat, Cole crops and some rice growing beautifully in the land.

Even in the darkness, Sand Leaf with the summer breeze from the sea was a really marvelous place.

The members of the summer training camp formed a long line as they walked from the school campus towards Choshi. Some of them banded together by levels, others by guilds, some just walked together with their friends.

Even if they were moving at night, these beginners were still Adventurers. They cast their own magical light sources and moved tirelessly. Some were riding horses, but it was dangerous as you couldn't see where you were stepping, so most of them preferred to walk.

Minori's party was much further ahead from the front of this line.

After walking for 30 minutes, Minori suddenly said:

"...I think we must protect this town."

Tohya understood her feelings.

Tohya also wanted to protect, and felt they should protect them.

But they had no reason to.

The town was the residence of the People of the Land, they had nothing to do with Minori and Tohya. They didn't accept any quests, so they wouldn't receive any items or gold as rewards if they saved the town.

It was not a player city, and they didn't really know anyone there, just townsfolk they met for the first time during this training camp.

Even though there were no reasons, they still felt an urgent obligation to help. It might be unfathomable, but Tohya had this emotion in him, just like a rock in his heart.

But because he couldn't find the reason to help, he couldn't describe it well.

Maybe his other companions had the same thoughts, Isuzu, Rundelhaus, and Serara were all deep in thought as they moved.

There was a dark feeling of unease in his heart, he could not dismiss this sense of helplessness and confinement. Even if he hated his lack of ability and struggled to leave, his limbs felt like they were immobilized in a nightmare. This feeling of helplessness lingered in the air around Tohya's group.

"I think that way because... we don't have any pressing reason to help but..."

Minori was at a loss for words.

Gazing up at the forest on the other end of the mountain, you could see torchlights like needles that were flickering with malice in the dark.

"Although it is scary, I don't think we should stop."

Isuzu was a little uneasy, but you could feel her determination in her words.

Two-thirds of the summer training camp attendees were beginners, and they had various levels among them. Some were between level 20-30, some were even lower, you needed to be at least level 20 to battle the goblins.

And they could not ascertain the enemy numbers.

Nyanta called them 'a mid-size splinter group that is responsible for pillaging', Naotsugu estimated there were at most 200 of them. But it was hard to give a good estimate in the dark.

There were countless reasons why they shouldn't help.

They had no reason to help.

What they did have, was the emotion of wanting to help.

The sound of the waves surrounded Tohya's silent-moving group. The sea was pitch-black, only the waves that washed ashore could be seen under the moonlight.

With the moonlight and the sound of waves in the background, Tohya had a stroke of inspiration.

"Do we need a reason?"

"Ah?"

Serara asked in surprise.

"Do we need a reason to help?"

After Tohya finished, a strange and wonderful silence fell between them.

"Even if there is no reason, we can still give them a hand, we are Adventurers, right? Because this is an adventure, if the Adventurers want to help, we can do so even if there is no reason, right?"

As Tohya said these words, the murky emotions inside him started to take shape. That's right. Tohya questioned himself on why he was so troubled over this.

Why was he trying to find a reason?

Did he want to explain it to someone?

You didn't need a reason to help people.

"Right? Minori and everyone, since we want to help, we should just help them, it's that simple right? Because we want to help!"

Tohya puffed up his chest and shouted.

"That's right!"

The first to respond to Tohya was Rundelhous, he nodded strongly and put his hand on Tohya's shoulder, breaking his silence and showing his support.

"Fu fu fu, to think I was in a slight disarray. That is correct, we are Adventurers. If we run away now, then why did we become Adventurers in the first place, wouldn't that be putting the cart before the horse? The goblins are nothing!"

Rundelhous let go of Isuzu's slightly worried hand.

"I am also a small part of the Adventurers, I don't want to abandon Choshi and escape to Akiba shamelessly!"

"Please...Please wait a moment, what are we going to do? How are we going to protect the town? They have no walls, and they have twice our numbers!"

Tohya and Rundelhous were congenial with each other, but Serara raised an objection in a shrill voice.

"We will leave this to Minori."

"Ah?"

Tohya's change of subject made Minori's eyes open wide in astonishment. Tohya felt sorry for being unreasonable, but if he didn't push Minori on, his passion would be all a waste.

Lighting a fire under Minori was Tohya's duty.

Tohya understood that being rash like this was the best way to go about it.

"...protect. City walls...impossible...Enemy numbers, impossible..."

Minori started mumbling, her lips moved and said: "What would Shiroe-san do...". Tohya who was watching this scene felt a bit confused as well as an itching feeling of joy. Since his sister started thinking, there was nothing to worry about.

3 steps, 5 steps.

With Tohya's group's eyes focusing on her, Minori stopped and nodded.

"I have an idea, there is one way."

(As expected of my Minori.)

His sister had a strong sense of responsibility, Tohya feared that she would be crushed by the pressure, but he also thought the pressure would become Minori's strength. From what Tohya saw, Minori had learned to turn this sense of responsibility into a driving force to push her forward after joining Log Horizon.

The source should be from her idolization of Shiroe, Tohya also looked up to Naotsugu the warrior from a man's perspective, so he could understand this.

"What is the way?"

Serara asked Minori gingerly.

"Miss Minori, I am all ears."

Rundelhous and the troubled Isuzu beside him also gathered by her side.

"With our numbers, we cannot successfully defend Choshi from the goblins. Other than the goblins, we also need to contend with the Sahuagin, their numbers are more than double that of ours. Not all of the

campers might want to take part, even if we fend them off, the fields will be ravaged which will damage the town greatly... that's why... we cannot protect."

Minori was firm with her words, even her brother Tohya was dumbstruck by her attitude.

The party was silent after hearing her words.

Minori looked at the faces of her companions, and turned around suddenly like a spring.

"Ah..."

"Hmmm, Minori-cchi's instincts have become sharp nya."

"The big brothers have come to visit, checking for any naughty boys and girls who are up to no good, baby!"

"I am a old man nya."

"Nyanta-san!"

Minori saw Nyanta and Naotsugu, Shouryuu and Rezarick were also not far behind. Serara was already hugging Nyanta's slender arms, her feet were off the ground.

"Teacher Naotsugu!"

Tohya straightened his back on reflex. Naotsugu was not a strict teacher who stood on ceremony, the problem lay with Tohya's consciousness. He would straighten his back naturally in the presence of this veteran guardian, but the two of them usually chatted without any inhibition about girls and panties.

"Nyanta-san..."

Minori's expression was a bit worried, she didn't want to back down, she looked at Nyanta as if she wanted to stare him down and said: "Please give your permission", then bowed.

"That's right Chief Nyanta, teacher Naotsugu, this is the time where you should watch us walk away in silence, that's the manly way to do it!"

Tohya stood beside Minori.

Minori must have thought of a way. She looked up to Shiroe and had been learning things in order to catch up to him. She must have a plan to break this stalemate, and if that were so, Tohya could not let Minori be the only one caught in the spotlight.

"There is no need for permission, Adventurers are free by nature nya. If you have made up your mind, even if the enemy has higher levels or if you need help from your guilds, Adventurers are free to work towards their goal nya... But Minori, this will be quite a difficult path to travel nya."

Nyanta seemed to know everything, Minori nodded her head to show her determination.

"Understood nya, Puck also said that 'night is short, the summer night is shorter.' So we should hurry, right Minori-cchi?"

Nyanta allowed Serara to hang from his arms and gave them a sharp look. Tohya and Minori looked at each other and bumped their fists together.

Part 2

"1 party approaching from the eastern hill, another party 40m behind them, 2 other parties coming from the northwest."

The moonlight casted dark shadows of trees in the forest.

Minori used the binoculars she borrowed from Naotsugu to survey the area from the top of the tree and reported to her teammates below.

"Roger."

"Understood, I will start chanting."

Minori's party was at the tip of the forest in the hills near the Sand Leaf River. It was almost midnight, they were a distance away from the road and on a hill the size of a sport stadium, standing by in the forest.

Minori climbed up a big and steady tree to survey the surroundings and relayed the findings to her comrades, her duty right now was to reconnoiter the area.

Tohya who already had damage intercept magic cast on him used this barrier which had the effect of a mirror to charge into the darkness.

He was on his way to lure the goblin party from the eastern hills. After a while, there was a sharp sound of a bowstring followed by the roar of goblins rushing nearer through the grass.

Tohya received an all-round battle training in Log Horizon, including the use of the bow which was not suitable for dungeons. Samurai were compatible with bows and arrows and could equip horse-riding bows or strong bows. Tohya used a strong bow to attract the attention of the goblins from a distance away, attempting to lure them to his party's position.

"...Approaching, 2 parties noticed us."

Minori's warning made her comrades take up their weapons and steel themselves for battle. In this open space, the distance where a battle would start was much further away, the tactics were different from that of the narrow dungeons. The monsters and Adventurers would see each other from far away and ranged attacks would start before they engaged in a melee fight.

But there was a downside to this long-range battle as they might attract the attention of the neighboring enemies as well. Tohya attacked with a bow and drew 2 parties of about 10 monsters in. They were unable to confirm the number in the dark, but Minori estimated from the swaying torches and the sound of the grass.

"Please start the countdown."

Serara's tense voice stated.

Minori looked closely into the darkness with her binoculars, phosphorescence appeared in the darkness illuminated by the moonlight. 'Moon Fae Drop' was an expensive mid-level eye potion made by pharmacists, by using these eye drops, you would be able to see clearly in the dark like a cat, the effect lasted for 24 hours. This was also a consumable provided by Naotsugu.

"5...4...3...2..."

Minori concentrated and started counting down.

Serara filled her staff with the spell she prepared, and activated it when Minori counted to 0.

About 30 meters away from the party, a sudden noise came from the forest and the wild grass twisted densely in the night.

One of the 3 healer classes... Druid.

Each of the 3 class had their own unique spells, but they were not limited to just healing.

Druids were mages that could use the power of the forest, their magic came from the mysterious springs of Mother Nature. They were not prominent in places like dungeons, but in the open world like this, the potential power of nature could not be ignored. Druid was not a magic attack class, their direct attack magic lacked power, but they were able to use a variety of magic.

The spell Serara casted, 'Willow Spirits', could affect the surrounding plants, stimulating the growth of branches and vines to entangle and bind the enemy.

"Here they come!"

Tohya threw his strong bow behind the tree, drew his sword and faced the front. The binding magic Serara prepared in advance had been activated based on Minori's gauge of distance to only trap the enemies at the back, leaving Tohya and Rundelhous to take care of the enemies in front.

"I can see them clearly, I leave the opening ceremony to you Tohya, make us proud."

Rundelhous had been adjusting his thinking in the recent battle training.

He understood that he would have a chance to shine even if he left the start of the battle to Tohya. He was more patient about using his magics and would not think about stealing the show. He was now casting a spell to buff Tohya's attacks, 'Icicle Blade'.

After Rundelhous finished casting, a chilling cold entwined Tohya's blade, the icy surface flashing in the dark.

"My spell is different from an enchanter's, it will only cause a few additional attacks, so go all-out right from the start."

Tohya nodded to acknowledge Rundelhous.

(We need to end this fast.)

The goblins were more formidable than skeletons, the group at the back broke free from the binds and were on their way here after some time. Serara's spell could bind all monsters within a certain area and hinder their movement, but the effect was short.

Not only the group behind, the 2nd party was also on its way, there must be even more hidden goblins in the hills.

Nyanta said there were at most 200, but that was wrong. There were squirming movements all around the dark shadowy forest, they could not imagine how many enemies were still in the dark.

"Rudy conserve your powerful spells, we will win this by superior numbers. I can support for 30 seconds... 'Maestro Echo'!"

As Isuzu supported with her magic, Tohya and Rundelhous attacked the goblins.

Swords and magic danced in the air.

Rundelhous understood Isuzu's instructions and repeatedly used small-level spells in lieu of powerful single-shot magics. These spells had low damage, but the cast time and cool down time were short, so it was suitable for consecutive use.

Rundelhaus abandoned his powerful spell with a 5 second cast time, opting to use consecutive magic attacks with 1.5 second cast times. The ice and fire he conjured were beautifully echoed by Isuzu's singing.

A dark red music note followed every fire attack that hit, a sea-blue note would complement any ice attack that connected.

Isuzu the bard had low attack power.

This was the fate of all support classes, something that could not be helped.

But she was able to do other things because of this.

Isuzu received information from her 5 senses and duplicated Rundelhous' magic through singing half a beat slower.

Being able to replicate an ally's magic attack, the ultimate skill of the bard.

A sorcerer naturally had high magic attacks, so what would happen if all the magics were doubled? Isuzu's voice could only last for 30 seconds, but it was more than enough to defeat the group of goblins.

Following right after was the 2nd wave of goblins that wounded Tohya all over. But Minori's Damage Intercept spell negated the damage, the remaining wounds were healed through magic. The 2 healers took turns to heal and Rundelhous finished chanting his powerful magic after 5 seconds of chanting. The group successfully took down the 10 goblins.

Part 3

"It may be difficult, but it is possible to win."

Serara who was healing Tohya responded, "Don't be careless."

Isuzu drank from her bottle and passed it to Rundelhous who was retying his shoelaces. Rundelhous took the bottle and advised Serara, "Miss Serara, it is taboo to be careless, but we will lose the chance to take victory if we lack courage."

As the 4 of them caught their breath, Minori was fighting with a folded map. This was given to her by Shiroe at the beginning of training camp as he said 'Although I don't think it is necessary'. It was a map centered around Sand Leaf peninsula, with details of the abandoned capital Eastal, Tsukuba and other cities drawn finely on it.

Even with their enhanced night vision, it was hard to make out the contents of the map. She hid among the grasses where the light would not leak out and conjured 'Bugs Light'.

"Yes...Yes, we are fine, we are resting for now, heading towards north-northwest correct? Okay...about 3km, roger, please ask Nyanta-san and the rest to take care too."

Serara sounded like she was communicating through telepathy.

Minori's choice of tactics was pure and simple.

They were going to infiltrate and attack the goblin pillaging group in the forest on the hill.

Since they could not completely protect the town, they had to take the initiative to attack and make use of the forest the goblins were hiding in to hold night strikes. There was no need to destroy all of their forces, goblins were different from skeletons, they might be evil but they were still demihumans. If you gave them a big enough blow, it would sap their morale and make them flee.

In the process of protecting the village, if they could reduce the numbers of attackers in advance, the defenders would have an easier job. This strategy seemed so barbaric and looked desperate, but it was working more smoothly than imagined.

Minori only had a rough plan in mind, but it was thanks to Nyanta and Naotsugu fine-tuning the details and lending them items that it was going so smoothly. And Nyanta's group was taking part in the operation as well.

Nyanta, Naotsugu, Shouryuu, and Rezarick headed straight to the center of the goblins' pillaging group.

They lured in the goblins at the heart of the zone and proceeded to pick them off one by one. Minori's group was on standby to the south of them to deal with any escaping goblins or isolated parties. They had been executing this battle plan for 2 hours.

Minori's party defeated about 20 goblins during this period. The parties of 5-6 goblins were easy to handle, but the solitary goblins were unpredictable, it was hard to tell what they were trying to do.

They did not have permission from the supervisor... Crescent Moon Alliance's Maryele to engage the army, so they were acting out of line. Although Minori felt guilty about this, she tried not to think too deeply about

it. She felt she deserved the fierce lecture from Maryele when she reported in through telepathy.

There was a need for most of the defending forces to be stationed at Choshi to make this battle plan work. The smaller the number of guerrilla forces, the more the impact and confusion they would create. This would balance out the difference in numbers between the goblins and the defending forces and improve the chances of the goblins giving up the attack.

Maryele was not convinced by Minori, but she ended with the words "Really, if you act recklessly, I won't forgive you, okay?" Minori thought she was willing to forgive her actions. (Just a guess, but it should be correct.)

"We seem to have taken out all the surrounding enemies, shall we move?"

Isuzu substituted for Minori and surveyed the area with the binoculars.

"Towards the southwest direction... Ah, they are amazing, moving so stealthily."

Isuzu sounded impressed as she reported in.

The party Nyanta and the others made on the spot was built around Naotsugu and Rezarick, with the 2 swashbucklers Nyanta and Shouryuu as the main damage dealers.

Swashbucklers used their high attack speed to build up damage on the enemy, the 2 of them didn't have flashy or loud explosive spells like sorcerers. They were able to deal consecutive area attacks on the enemy, displaying their terrifying skills in guerrilla warfare in the forest.

(Hmm... Head north-northwest 3 km to the top of the mountain ridge... Destination will be the abandoned shrine we visited... We should avoid the forest trail...)

This route would lead down the valley, but they could make it to the other side of the ridge.

"What should we do, Minori?"

Minori kept the map with everyone's eyes on her and nodded.

"We go down the valley to the west, then head northwest, stay alert."

The group moved as planned.

Minori received periodic reports from Nyanta and relayed them to Maryele. Was Maryele discussing this with the People of the Land? Had the other campers returned to Akiba with 'Call of Home'? No, there must be some who stayed behind to defend Choshi.

Minori walked in the darkness, a sense of unease and futility filled her heart.

They were just engaging a small part of the goblin army. Minori did not know the details, but Nyanta spoke of a large tribe of goblins to the north, they even reached the ruin capital Eastal, which was the start of this incident.

In other words, they were just fighting the tip of the iceberg of the goblin army, a splinter group of unregulated goblins.

When she thought of this, she felt a sense of emptiness.

Would fending off this pillaging group just be delaying the inevitable? Minori could not stop her doubts from forming like rain clouds.

"It is dangerous to battle at night."

Tohya who was leading the group said.

"The silver flash when I draw my blade is blinding even with my enhanced vision. We need to be wary of mud and roots to keep our balance, my heart is beating fast, the stench of the blood and gore stinks, but..."

Tohya didn't turn around.

He remained focused and bashed a path through the vegetation as he made his way down the valley.

"But I will do my best... I will just do my part to help."

Tohya's voice was like a torch burning in the darkness.

Minori lifted her gaze.

She watched the back of her brother, Tohya had the strong feeling that he must protect and help. This was a strength Minori did not have, Tohya's determination was both simple and straightforward, his speed was fast enough to leave any doubts and confusion behind.

"Yeah, that will be enough."

Isuzu was the first to nod in agreement.

(As I suspected...)

The free-spirited Isuzu was actually agreeing with this, seemed like Minori's prediction was correct.

Isuzu had been hesitant before the battle and had been concerned about Rundelhaus' safety. Since that was the case, they could not afford to lose.

Because Rundelhaus was also Minori's comrade.

In order to protect his secret, in order to help her comrade, they had to make it through.

"Why are you saying this? Tohya, Miss Isuzu, isn't it obvious that we need to help these people since we are Adventurers? I am doing this because I want to, because I want to be an amazing Adventurer."

Rundelhaus said spiritedly.

Tohya agreed in a loud voice.

Minori's duty was to protect this silly but adorable group.

Damage interception spells were not healing magic.

And from Minori's point of view, it was not really magic.

This was a promise to protect her friends. Since they would be fighting on the same battlefield, she wanted to protect everyone and to shoulder any crisis. She didn't even want them to feel the pain of being hit, that was her ability and will as a kannagi.

(I am still too green... I am not strong enough to help meaningfully...)

She thought in her heart.

But even so, she carried on to think.

She would not say something vague like 'One day I will', she wanted the strength tomorrow or even today.

For this reason she faced the darkness without fear.

"Halt!"

Isuzu's voice pulled Minori back to reality.

Isuzu squinted at the mountain ridge, there was only a pitch dark forest ahead, but bards seemed to be more sensitive in detecting movements in the dark.

She signaled with her hand and moved ahead to scout.

"It's a demonic beast... Not sure what type, but there are goblins riding on giant canine creatures."

Isuzu reported softly, the wind blowing through the hill would not bring their voices and scents to the mountain ridge so they had the advantage. But the enemy had the higher ground so the terrain was in their favor.

"There are 3 demonic beasts and 3 goblins."

"Dire wolves... they are strong enemies."

Minori said quietly.

She only had elementary knowledge she learned from Shiroe. Dire wolves were big feral wolves, but they were not wild animals. They were monsters driven insane by magic and the power of the moon, twice as strong as normal wolves.

"Any weaknesses?"

"Not many, but for this situation... bright light and loud noises, but that will only work once."

Minori answered Rundelhous curtly.

But no one was hesitating, even if they were, they were not backing down.

"Let's do this, Rudy-nii please be our main striker, let's protect Rudy-nii and win this one, Minori cast a barrier on him too, please coordinate attacks with Rudy-nii, Isuzu-nee."

Tohya had the support of the group, and they turned their attention to the ridge.

The moon was high in the sky, the long night was just beginning.

Part 4

Night fell in the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice'.

A meeting for interested parties was held in the brooding atmosphere. It was not meant to be a compulsory meeting but almost all the nobles and advisers for the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' and all 3 ambassadors from the Round Table Council were present, so it was as good as the grand meeting that was planned for the second half of the 10-day event.

A meeting with many attendees was usually a noisy place with people fidgeting and coughing. But today no one was making any noise, as if they were afraid of triggering something.

The topic was 'the security situation in the Yamato archipelago'.

The proposer for this meeting was Baron Craindit of Utsurugi Shrine city. The Baron did not start this out of his own initiative, but because he was unable to withstand the pressure of the situation, which was obvious to everyone.

Baron Craindit who was chairing the meeting as its proposer was acting so awkward that it was painful to watch, fidgeting with his beard and wiping off cold sweat under Shiroe's stare.

"Even if you say that..."

"Hmmm..."

"Fu..."

The meeting was going in circles when it got to the main point, they had not made any progress.

"The goblin army that appeared in the Yamato archipelago came from the fortress 'Seven Falls'... that... ah... came to raze... our land...that's it."

After Baron Craindit who had obviously been forced to chair the meeting stammered out this speech in a shrill voice tens of minutes ago, there had been no further progress.

(From the viewpoint of the nobles, they want us to go into this topic ourselves and gather our intelligence and force more concessions. Or they are trying to guilt trip us for not attacking 'Seven Falls' in the first place...)

Shiroe observed the nobles as he thought. The lords had looks of fear, despair, anger, and pleading on their faces.

Their attitude was full of unease, Marquis Kyriva from Tsukuba couldn't seem to sit still, occasionally glaring at the Round Table Council members.

(Tsukuba... and Maihama are the closest cities to the goblin army, the front-line of this war. Compared to the biggest city Maihama in the east, Tsukuba is weak and their walls are fragile... I remember they are focused on the study of magic and sages, so they must hold a grudge against us.)

"Ah, Eh, cough, and so... the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' is facing a great crisis, the demihuman attacks are the most disastrous thing in history, regarding this..."

Baron Craindit pushed the meeting forward with his dull words, but there was numerous chatter breaking out in the room, the lords conversing with their advisers and their neighboring nobles. Their voices were so low you could not make out what they were saying, but combined together it gave an air of commotion.

Looking to one side, he saw Michitaka shrugging.

The meeting was out in order.

But with the future of the Round Table Council at stake, they could not give too much ground right now.

"May I ask, does anyone know the whereabouts of the 'Knights of Izumo'?"

Shiroe had no choice but to ask this way, and he seemed to have poured cold water over the room, some of the nobles stared at Shiroe with wide eyes and gaping mouths.

(What is this reaction? Do the People of the Land think we are monkeys that cannot think? I guess this can't be helped, we were looking down on the People of the Land and treating them like NPCs not too long ago, so that makes us even, but... Seems like the 'Knights of Izumo' will not be deploying. From their reaction, they seem to be engaged in another crusade? Or is there a deeper reason?)

"The... the 'Knights of Izumo' are the guardian angels of Yamato, we cannot trouble them to intervene in this fight. Moving on, may I ask the members of the Round Table Council present why Akiba is not intervening in the face of this grand crisis of Yamato? I have heard the elite order of knights led by Lord Krusty is mighty and strong, is the Round Table Council not deploying troops for this incident?"

"I don't think this meeting is to question what Akiba thinks, but to ascertain what all the nobles of the League want, correct? The decision of the Round Table Council is to gather more information about this incident."

Michitaka scratched his head and said nonchalantly.

Since they were attending a meeting, they did not mind being asked to express their views. But it was irritating if it was used to steer the conversation off-topic. That was the attitude Michitaka was showing.

"I heard the knights of Akiba have never failed before!"

A skinny and tall noble whose name he couldn't remember added in a loud voice.

"I don't know where you heard that rumor from, but the Round Table Council and Akiba do not have a regular military force or order of knights."

Shiroe shrugged helplessly.

He finally understood that battle power was judged in units of 'order of knights'. This seemed to be the case among the People of the Land. The order of knights did not refer to elite soldiers who rode on horses, but meant professional soldiers. It was correct to equate 'order of knights' to 'ever-ready military force'.

There were almost no mercenaries in this world, militias made up of normal civilians could only be seen when farmers defended themselves. Part of the reason was that the nobles were not happy with the existence of armed civilians.

In other words, 'order of knights' was the only way nobles could understand a military unit.

But even if that were the case, Shiroe didn't think Akiba needed to accommodate their way of doing things.

"Then what is the use of Adventurers!"

Marquis Kyriva said rudely with bloodshot eyes, making Michitaka retort.

"What is the use of Adventurers? What is the meaning of this?"

"What else could it mean! Adventurers' ability is a gift from the gods, you have the obligation to save this land!"

"I never heard anything like this before."

"What baffling words, immortality! You have such powers, and you want to forsake your duty to this world? Shameless, why are you so arrogant when you have such abilities?"

"...Bullshit!"

Michitaka's thundering roar shook the air in the whole room.



Shiroe's group had been collecting data. Discussing about the loss of memories before the meeting and also the possibility of sending out an expedition force.

It was a frightening experience to lose your memories, losing the memories of the real world meant losing your home and being lost in this alternate world, making the feelings of unease more intense. But they could not avoid living their lives in this world, this was a clear concept.

For Adventurers like Shiroe, even death didn't mean the end. Although they had no idea how long this would continue... but they only carried on living this never-ending life.

Even if they could avoid sending forces to attack the goblin army, they would inevitably be involved in war one day. The Round Table Council had the consensus that since war was inevitable, they were fine with fighting against the goblin king too. They had already come out with a war plan to win this fight, and the Round Table Council was aware of this when they delegated the decision to the 3 ambassadors.

But it would be troubling if they let the nobles manipulate them so easily. Shiroe expressed that providing military aid so readily would leave a scar on the Round Table Council, Akiba and the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'. They didn't mind working with the People of the Land, but they must go through due process.

The 3 of them had specific roles in the meeting tonight.

Shiroe would be supportive of the Round Table Council sending forces, luring them to cough up information.

Michitaka would be against the provision of military aid, baiting them to give concessions.

Krusty would be responsible for making the final decision.

Put simply, Michitaka's opposition against Marquis Kyriva's request was going by the script, but there was a fury beyond his acting in his roar.

(...Because we are immortals and there is no risk so we must work? Of course we will be angry if you put it that way.)

For Adventurers who knew about the loss of memory, these words were taboo, of course Michitaka was furious.

(The arrogance that the strong have against the weak... No, don't laugh, we might be acting arrogantly without knowing it.)

"We are not nobles of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' because we did not go through the joining ceremony, isn't that why we were not invited to yesterday's meeting?"

Michitaka stared at the crowd with a fierce look in his eyes.

Akatsuki found out about the secret meeting the lords and nobles held last night.

Because of the effort of the nobles' spies, she was unable to find out the contents of that meeting. But the content could be deduced from the current meeting.

"There is nothing wrong since we have not been bestowed with any titles through the ceremony. But to hold a meeting only between the nobles and then making a one-sided request from Akiba and the Round Table Council for help, what is the reason behind this? We did not take part in that meeting, do we have the obligation to accept the request in this meeting? What do you think Baron Craindit?"

"Yes, we definitely do not... have this sort of thinking. Lord Michitaka, you are mistaken."

"I am not a lord, didn't I just say I wasn't bestowed with any title?"

"Even... Even if you say so... We the nobles of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' did not come to a... collusion? Anyway... we did not gather together to request Akiba to send troops, there is no such thing..."

Baron Craindit stammered badly under the intimidation of Michitaka.

"The request for troops is Marquis Kyriva's personal request and has nothing to do with the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' correct?"

Shiroe responded.

This made Marquis Kyriva panic.

"Eh! You mean I orchestrated all of this out of my own selfish desires? My dear allies, Earl Kashiwazaki! Marquis Taihaku! Chief of Lake Suwa! Why are my dear allies not saying anything to the Adventurers!"

"This..."

"It is not the opinion of all of us, not a consensus... But many of us hold this view, is glorious and mighty Akiba fine with Yamato falling into crisis?"

A middle-aged fat noble pressed Michitaka relentlessly.

"We are not cats or dogs. 'Because you can't die, so go take care of the goblins', is that it? If we try to convince our people to go to war with this reason, how can we earn the trust of the citizens!"

Shiroe restrained the passionate Michitaka and let him sit down.

Shiroe didn't mind Michitaka opposing loudly out of his duty, but if he lost control of his emotions and leaked the fact about the memory loss to the People of the Land, things could get complicated.

(Yeah... This is going to be troublesome...)

Shiroe thought the current situation was a bit of a failure.

Marquis Kyriva and Michitaka's hostility was forcing this into a stalemate. Shiroe did not mind sending an expedition force to help them. No, he thought that it was inevitable that they needed to help.

He needed to find a common ground for both parties to work on, but the meeting was breaking up before he could do that, and it was hard to interject his opinions at this stage.

(We want to bait them into giving concessions, but we did not decide on what kinds of concessions to work for, that is a failure... Examples would be financial or economic aid, or signing a contract. No matter what, attending this meeting without a goal is a mistake.)

The meeting was frozen under this heavy atmosphere.

Even Duke Sergead was unable to speak in this situation. As Shiroe attempted to break the stalemate after thinking for a while, the meeting room door opened suddenly.

Coming in along with a breeze of wind was a beautiful princess.

It was Raynesia wearing a dress the color of dawn with her hair coiled up.

Part 5

Raynesia was regretting this.

She had been regretting non-stop since a moment ago.

Those who were familiar with how Raynesia actually was would be moved to tears seeing how hardworking she was at regretting. Regretting was an unproductive action, so it could not be described as hardworking, but let's ignore that for now.

Raynesia did not have any energy to spare with the details today.

The hall was bigger than Raynesia imagined.

Raynesia had been eavesdropping on the other side of the door for a while.

As she came from a clan of Dukedom, she could not do such lowly things as eavesdropping (she also lacked the skill), the one doing it was Elissa.

She seemed to be driven by the procession of the meeting as she barged in, her legs were trembling and her heart was beating fast. Raynesia was a daughter of a noble family, so she was used to smiling and dancing gracefully under the eyes of the crowd. But this was her first time appearing in a political setting, and there was no plan for her to ever attend one.

'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' was heavily influenced by the culture of nobility, and women would not be seen as independent entities, even more so for single ladies. No woman had ever been given permission to express her views in such a setting, and there wouldn't be any in the future as well. Raynesia had been educated to be an ideal, virtuous, and low-profile lady, so she knew this very well, and was fearful of her colossal actions.

But a certain emotion in Raynesia's heart was pushing her on, to stand up on her own away from the shelter of her parents or knights.

Raynesia, who in her heart was dripping with cold sweat, was on the surface moving elegantly into the meeting room.

"This is..."

"She is still as beautiful..."

"It's Duke Corwen's granddaughter Lady Raynesia."

"Just like a fairy dancing on the surface of a lake under the moonlight."

It was not only the nobles, there were also many advisers and knights in the meeting room as well. Many of them had been mesmerized by Raynesia when she debuted that night.

Some of them had looks of curiosity and even lust.

The smooth contours of her face and her delicate face, sorrowful eyes, clear bridge of her nose, and her hair like silver strands coiled high up in a bun. A beautiful line that extended from her slender neck down to her collarbone complemented her gown wonderfully. She had a thin figure with alluring curves, there should be no objections in calling her a 1st class beauty in the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'.

If you married her, you would be part of the Corwen family, one of the two most prestigious clans in all of Yamato. So it was not only gazes of adoration and love, she also attracted attention of ambitious suitors.

The table in the meeting room was arranged in a U-shape, the one seated at the center at the deep end of the room was Baron Craindit who was chairing the meeting, beside him was her grandfather Duke Sergead.

In Raynesia's eyes, her grandfather appeared more strict and terrifying than normal. She prayed that he would not fuss over this too much today and walked to the middle of the room and gave a curtsy, the traditional greeting. First to the front, then to the east and finally to the west.

She had stopped thinking.

Her brain seemed to be stuffed with cotton, unable to think of anything. She was just moving gracefully like a puppet from her years of training as she greeted the nobles. The 'real Raynesia' seemed to be watching this scene as if it had nothing to do with her, trembling and hiding deep in her heart, panicking and holding an imaginary pillow over her head.

But as she straightened herself and raised her gaze, she looked straight into the eyes of her target.

They had been meeting almost everyday for the past week and acted contrary to the customs of the nobles, a scornful brawny man who appeared polite on the outside.

A monster that could read minds. Looked like a veteran knight on the surface, but was actually an expert of sarcasm on the inside.

The senate leader of the Round Table Council... Krusty .

With a huge body from Raynesia's view, he was wrapped in a black attire with few decorations. He was calm as usual even in this hapless meeting.

Hiding his eyes behind his square glasses with a hint of a smile on his lips, an expression of mischief.

Raynesia stared intensely at Krusty.

Krusty was also looking at Raynesia, and he said in a low voice with his mouth barely moving.

"... Not thinking of being a lazy bum today?"

(That's obvious.)

(Of course I want to.)

Raynesia wanted to return immediately to her comfortable bedroom, change into her slightly stretched but very comfortable flannel pajamas and roll around on her bed.

She wanted to sleep until noon and not talk to anyone, get up slowly and eat lunch before washing her face, then go back to sleep again.

That's why she was looking straight at Krusty.

She had no spare energy to smile elegantly like a noble lady.

Clenching her teeth, her lips closed tight, she was staring at Krusty with this uncouth expression. Raynesia could feel the displeasure of Elissa behind her, but she had no time to mind the details as she continued to stare at Krusty.

A commotion started in the meeting room.

What was this sudden intrusion all about?

The nobles thought this could be the arrangement of Duke Sergead, but they could not help asking quietly.

"Raynesia..."

"Krusty-sama."

Raynesia interrupted her grandfather without even looking at his word and spoke to Krusty.

She prayed in her heart for her voice not to tremble.

Even if she had a feeling that there was no turning back, she still disregarded everything and made a request to Krusty.

(This is not a man, he is a monster, a monster...)

Raynesia who was shaking in her heart recalled the calm and steady demeanor of Krusty, she didn't have any intimate contact with him in all their peaceful times together. She remembered he had never told her any gentle words, and his godlike observation powers.

Recalling his kind actions and words as well as his fake exterior.

He made sure everything looked fine on the surface and made necessary arrangements. She and Krusty were accomplices in this.

They had worked together to lie to everyone in the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' this past week, using their kind smiles and gentle actions to hide the truth about them, obscuring their laziness and mischief, protecting their little secret.

(That's right... I probably... trust in the dishonesty of this man, trust in the lies of this conman, believe that he can see through me and help me in this ridiculous joke...)

"Please go on, Raynesia-sama."

Krusty said politely and Raynesia acted in concert and moved closer to him, the 2 of them less than 1 meter apart.

"I want to go to Akiba, please escort me."

Raynesia informed clearly.

Her heart was peaceful and calm, even the noise from the meeting seemed to be so far away.

Her heartbeat, burning earlobes, and the change in Krusty's slight squint of his eyes as his expression changed all seemed so clear to her.

"Krusty-sama once swore an oath to me as a knight to stay by my side during the period of this meeting, so I beg of you, I have to make a trip to Akiba."

"Head to Akiba... to do what?"

"To recruit a volunteer army."

She could feel the nobles gasp at her words, the Round Table Council governed Akiba, the Adventurers of Akiba were the military force of the Round Table Council, the military forces referred to as 'order of knights' in this world.

So she was heading to a city not under her jurisdiction without permission to request the 'order of knights' for aid directly. According to the common sense of the nobles, this was an action that belittled the Round Table Council's authority.

But if Krusty, senate leader of the Round Table Council, accompanied her for the trip to recruit a volunteer army, the situation might be different.

Raynesia was only asking Krusty the knight to escort her, so even if Krusty accepted this role, the Round Table Council might not be so forgiving. The worst-case scenario would be her execution by guillotine for inciting a war.

But her actions might have positive effects on the Round Table Council since the Adventurers would likely avoid executing a princess escorted by their senate leader.

But would Duke Sergead allow his granddaughter to act so willfully? The nobles let out moans that seemed to be a mixture of disappointment, acceptance, or joy.

Krusty would most likely reject her, this was just a whim of a little girl after all.

But Raynesia continued to look at Krusty straight in the eye.

"I think this is a very very troublesome matter, correct?"

"...Yes it is."

Raynesia nodded with a gentle expression of a lady.

But she was not as calm as she appeared to the people in the meeting. If possible, she wanted to lean on Krusty and cry, that was how desperate she was.

"Why are you doing this?"

"...Krusty-sama said that Adventurers are a free people, I am just an ignorant girl... I do not understand political affairs, and also why my grandfather and the others are hiding the news that the 'Knights of Izumo' are currently missing."

The meeting room was engulfed in curses and swear words this time.

Criticism of Raynesia's ill-conceived words was loud enough to shake the walls. Elissa drew her dagger to protect her mistress, the nobles were even more animated upon seeing this.

"You have really done it this time."

"Please accompany me when the time for apologizing comes."

Raynesia replied to Krusty with an expression of resistance from the bottom of her heart.

This was not an expression befitting the blooming winter rose of Eastal, but almost no one noticed the slight change in Raynesia's expression in this vast meeting room. The accusation that Duke Sergead's granddaughter had betrayed the League and leaked information to the Round Table Council was still reverberating in the room.

"What are you thinking about?"

"So Krusty-sama is not all knowing... nothing, I am not thinking of anything... I just don't want to be a disgrace to the Corwen family."

The young man beside Krusty who looked like a mage claps his hands loudly. The sharp sound shook the air, stunning all the lords and knights and silencing the room.

It was probably a form of psychological magic.

Raynesia turned in the sudden silence as if she was protecting Krusty and said.

Just like what she told Krusty, she was not thinking about anything.

She was just going with the flow in her heart and making it up as she went:

"The Adventurers are free!... We might be weaker than the Adventurers, but that doesn't mean we cannot use our weakness to bully the Adventurers and use them like tools. I want to go to Akiba and plead with the Adventurers in that city. Krusty-sama says the Adventurers are free, so if any Adventurers are willing to help, they will not intervene. Be it 10 or 15 people, I want volunteers who are willing to aid us. Since we want to ask the free-spirited Adventurers for help, we need to have the proper etiquette. My grandfather taught me that proper etiquette cannot be expressed with only elegant words, so I want to go there and stand on the street to plead with each Adventurer face-to-face!"

She said.

She said it out loud.

Raynesia had lost all her vitality and almost collapsed dizzily, but a pair of hands supported her shoulders.

"Can I leave the rest to you, Shiroe-kun?"

"Allow me to reject, it will be a shame if I miss this."

"...Then let's leave it to Michitaka-dono."

The lightheaded Raynesia felt the conversation seemed to be coming from far away.

There was a sharp sound of a flute and there was an uproar in the meeting room.

This was followed by a rush of footsteps and the voices of angry arguments.

Raynesia moved as if she was guided by her partner in a dance and she was in the open balcony with the gentle night breeze before she knew it. She turned her head and saw the meeting room in chaos and a few

knights rushing after her. The one leading the knights was her respected and stern grandfather.

"Will you be going there?"

Her mind was confused and unable to think about anything, but her grandfather's voice was like shining letters in the clear night sky going straight into her mind. She nodded to acknowledge and seemed to feel her grandfather's smile, but that was probably her imagination.

She only held on to this thought for an instant.

A horrifying winged beast... a griffon glided in with the rising air. Raynesia was lifted off her feet like luggage before she could scream.

"Please excuse my impudence."

This leisurely voice came from the warrior Krusty.

He held her with his strong arms and jumped onto the back of the griffon with the power of his legs.

"You will be fine if you hold on tight."

Raynesia might have fainted if his voice was not so casual. The griffon took off into the starry night sky with the 2 of them on it.

The griffon with the young mage and a girl with black hair flew beside them.

Her grandfather and the nobles' meeting were left behind.

Raynesia held on to Krusty's chest tightly to avoid her gown from being blown away.

And so the whim of Raynesia caused her to tumble down an endless slope.

Part 6

"What are you laughing about my lord?"

Akatsuki twisted in Shiroe's arms and looked him in the eyes.

Shiroe had been snickering for a while now, making a 'fu fu fu' sound deep in his throat.

The griffon tore through the air of the starry night sky, flying northeast. They could reach Akiba within minutes at this speed. A journey that took a few hours by horse only took about 20 minutes by the flying griffon.

"Nothing, I just find this very amusing."

"Hmmm?"

Shiroe was laughing happily.

"This is the first time I have seen Krusty-san make that face, even though he tried to conceal it... But he totally caved in back there... This is really soothing."

"My lord... you are still bearing a grudge about the dance?"

"No way... well, maybe."

Shiroe replied to Akatsuki who was completely in his arms.

"And that princess is very daring to pull that move at that time... Etiquette, I have never thought of that, but she saved the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' that was trapped in a dead end. No matter what others may say, she did this to save the League, and she succeeded."

'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' needed the military might of the Round Table Council. Shiroe did not know why the 'Knights of Izumo' were not deploying, but the Adventurers would need to join the fray. It would be a long battle of attrition if they failed.

This might create some vacancies among the 24 members of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'.

To avoid that, the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' needed to pull the Round Table Council and the Adventurers to the battlefield no matter what concessions they had to give.

But there was a major misunderstanding on their part.

The Round Table Council was a governing body that administrated the function of the city, but they did not rule over Akiba.

The Adventurers were free individuals, the guilds and individuals were not restricted in any way. This concept was an unspoken rule in Akiba. For players like Shiroe who viewed Elder Tales as a game, this was something obvious and not worth mentioning.

If Akiba was riddled with rules and bound the freedom of the Adventurers, it would create undue stress among the Adventurers.

The ambassadors from the Round Table Council led by Krusty had the authority to provide military assistance against the goblin army, but they also needed to fulfill a condition. There was only one condition, they needed to get the support of the Adventurers in Akiba when they announced their decision to send aid.

If they failed to do this, Shiroe and the other ambassadors would lose their standings in Akiba.

Although the current Akiba was unable to sustain itself economically in terms of food, it was very strong in the military aspect. With the development of new products using the knowledge of the old world, they would definitely improve on this and build a strong economy.

Put simply, it was hard to entice Akiba with rewards since Akiba was a prosperous and rich city.

Since neither gold nor provision of technology would work, 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' had nothing to negotiate with. In reality, Akiba needed a lot of raw resources such as food. The players with their knowledge of the old world were always striving for comfort, they would not be satisfied with tasteless soggy crackers anymore.

But the nobles did not notice this in their short period of time together.

Shiroe already had a plan in mind to hint at what concessions the Round Table Council would want if the meeting progressed peacefully and to handle the necessary negotiation.

But some of the nobles led by Marquis Kyriva exploded emotionally forcing the meeting to a stalemate and Shiroe was unable to play his cards.

(She might not know this, but she not only rescued the nobles, she also saved the Round Table Council.)

Honestly, Shiroe agreed with sending out an expedition force.

This was something they could not avoid in order to live in this world. Since it was inevitable, they should fight when the conditions were in their favor.

The nobles treated the Adventurers as some invincible army and wanted them to join the fray, but there was a flaw in this view. Adventurers also bore some risk as well, and that was memory loss. Krusty proved that just one or two deaths would not wipe out all your memories, but it was still a terrifying pressure.

This information was still classified within the Round Table Council, but they would need to announce it to the people of Akiba one of these days.

When the time came, what elements would the Round Table Council need to maintain security? Shiroe had lost a lot of sleep over this, but now he thought the element would be acceptance, the awareness of the risk involved.

Because death had lost its meaning, so life without an end point would be chaotic. The concept of going from the beginning to the end was not applicable, so life would go on without a destination and lose their way.

The ambassadors of Akiba might be willing to assist the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal', but they mustn't be manipulated by the League, or they would lose the acceptance of the populace.

(She wants to do this directly...)

Princess Raynesia said she wanted to convince them personally.

'...plead with each Adventurer one at a time.'

She said it with determination.

(World Fraction...)

This foreboding term pressured Shiroe's heart.

Where did he stand in all this?

In Shiroe's eye, the demihumans were monsters, an enemy in the game. Ri Gan said they were the cursed result of the first World Fraction, a twisted nightmare.

Shiroe was a normal graduate student living on Earth, Elder Tales was just a game. Ri Gan said the Adventurers were summoned to this world in the second World Fraction.

It was only natural that Shiroe was immortal since this was a game. Ri Gan thought that the Spirit Theory and the process of the reconstruction of the body with the soul was a system linked to the secrets of creation in this world.

Where was he physically right now?

Shiroe worried about this.

Is this body that was flying through the sky on the back of the griffon a dream? Or was the one moving a mouse behind the computer a dream?

This line was becoming blurred.

If he lost his memories while bearing this worry, he would definitely fall into darkness, and so would all the other Adventurers, who could save them then? Such a helpful 3rd party did not exist.

The only way they could seek salvation was through acceptance.

Shiroe did not know how he could find this acceptance and this world would not give him the time to seek the answer. The days passed by at a horrifying speed, becoming the past in an instant.

The Adventurers probably had a long and winding road ahead of them. No, they definitely had to journey on this long and winding road, and Princess Raynesia said, "We need to have the proper etiquette."

(I have to say Krusty-san handled this smoothly.)

Akatsuki buried her face in Shiroe's chest as if she were cold and Shiroe hugged her close to protect her with a gentle expression on his face.

Marquis Kyriva's emotions erupted and sealed the retreat route of the Round Table Council. He was treating the Adventurers as equipment to be used, killing off the chance for Shiroe to send aid even if he wanted to.

If they agreed to help while facing such intimidation, it would hurt the pride of the Adventurers in Akiba and the Round Table Council would also lose its trust.

"My lord, we have reached Akiba."

"Right."

"It will be another battlefield, right?"

"It probably will be."

In this alternate world, night represented darkness.

Below her was the pitch black land, the sky decorated with the shining stars was maybe brighter than the ground. Shiroe did not have a watch, he thought it was after midnight, but Akiba was still awake.

Shiroe contacted the Round Table Council to make preparations when the griffon just started flying off. Rodrick from The Rodrick Firm should have finished by now to coordinate with Shiroe's plan.

The bright lights shining in the darkness of the night was Akiba.

It looked like just one single light, but the light split into countless torches as they got closer. Further in, they could make out the torches surrounding the central square, a circle of fire the size of a ring. Akiba's biggest battle guild D.D.D made this temporary landing point in a short amount of time to welcome their leader back.

The mounts which didn't have any night-vision landed in Akiba with the bright guiding lights. The night was only half over.

CHAPTER.

EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

[遠 征 軍]

▶ NAME: ELISSA

▶ LEVEL: 14

▶ RACE: ELF

▶ CLASS: ELDER MAID

▶ HP: 629

▶ MP: 589

▶ ITEM 1:

[OPENWORK PARASOL]

GORGEOUS AND COLORFUL PARASOL KNIT FROM FINE YARN. A NECESSITY FOR SERVANTS WHO PROTECT THEIR NOBLES FROM SUNLIGHT.



▶ ITEM 2:

[BROWNIE DUSTER]

A MAGICAL CLEANING TOOL GIVEN BY A BROWNIE AS REWARD FOR COMPLETING ITS QUEST. INCREASES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CERTAIN SUBCLASSES, RAISES FRIENDLINESS OF NPC'S IF GIVEN TO THEM AS A PRESENT. IT'S A MYSTERY AS TO WHO GAVE THIS TO ELISSA.



▶ ITEM 3:

[MAID CLOTHES]

A SET OF UNIFORM FOR MAIDS. ALTHOUGH SOME LANDERS USE THESE, WHAT ELISSA WEARS IS A SPECIAL PROTECTIVE GEAR FOR HER SUBCLASS. SHE SEEMS TO LIKE THIS BECAUSE IT IS COMFORTABLE AND STURDY.



Name: Elissa

Level: 12

Race: Elf

Class: Maid

HP: 629

MP: 589

Equipment

Openwork Parasol
Gorgeous and colorful parasol knit from fine yarn. A necessity for servants who protect their nobles from sunlight.

Brownie Duster
A magical cleaning tool given by a Brownie as reward for completing its quest. Increases the effectiveness of certain subclasses, raises friendliness of NPC's if given to them as a present. It's a mystery as to who gave this to Elissa.

Maid Clothes
A set of uniform for maids. Although some People of the Land use these, what Elissa wears is a special protective gear for her subclass. She seems to like this because it is comfortable and sturdy.

Chapter 3: Expeditionary Force

Part 1

Raynesia couldn't move until she got down from the griffon. A dance partner would put a hand around her waist, but she had not been carried around casually like luggage since she was a baby.

She didn't think it would be so embarrassing to be treated this way by a man. Raynesia struggled to loosen up her tense face and smile, but she knew her face was cramping up.

It didn't feel like reality when she made the decision during the meeting, it felt like she only acted on the spur of the moment.

Raynesia had spent too much time with Krusty this past week. Compared to facing this young man who was like a monster who could read her mind, saying arrogant things in front of the nobles was nothing... that was how she mustered her courage.

But she was unable to do anything about Krusty.

Raynesia knew Krusty was concerned about her and protected her from being blown off the griffon or feeling too cold. But the more concerned he was, the more embarrassed she felt, and she thought he could see right through her as well.

She appeared elegant on the surface but was actually lazy and hated interacting with people, only thinking about rolling around in her room, a useless and incurable person. But Raynesia didn't mind Krusty knowing all this right now.

But there was one thing if possible... No, one thing she must hide from him. That was her feeling of embarrassment when she was with Krusty.

"Please."

She took Krusty's hand for a moment and stood on the ground once more.

This was Akiba.

It was now late at night, but the lights in the streets were still burning bright, the light which looked like a bonfire from the sky was actually a variety of

light sources. The seven bonfires in the city square were orange, the streetlights were yellow, the magic lights were phosphorescent white.

"That... Thank you very much."

Raynesia thanked him with her gaze down, but Krusty was already focusing elsewhere. A group approached them hastily, they had a brand on their clothes similar to that on Krusty's cape.

Krusty greeted the group and turned towards the young mage who was carrying the black-haired girl down.

"Shiroe-kun, can you help her with her dressing and schedule?"

"Of course, but is it okay with you?"

"I have no choice, let's steel ourselves."

After talking to the young man called Shiroe, Krusty left with the group that had similar brands as him and the griffon took off at the same time.

Raynesia felt lost as the young man Shiroe spoke to her.

"Princess Raynesia, this is the first time greeting you. I am Shiroe from Log Horizon, this lady is Akatsuki."

After Shiroe finished the introductions, the petite girl named Akatsuki nodded to acknowledge, seemed like she kept to herself.

"Please follow me."

Shiroe turned and started walking, the streets were filled with Adventurers and they seemed to be rushing about for some reason.

Raynesia declared that she wanted to come to Akiba to convince the Adventurers, but she had no concrete idea how to do that. The Round Table Council should be something like the nobles' meeting, from her vague impression, she should first seek permission from them before meeting the Adventurers one by one.

Akiba was totally different from Maihama.

Unlike the beautiful and gorgeous Maihama with fruit trees and crystals by the streets, this town seemed to utilize the ruins of the centuries past. She

would be lost if she lost sight of the young man leading the way, so Raynesia focused on staying alert.

A female pedestrian lugging a big bag with her gave way to Shiroe and spoke a few words with him before nodding and going off. Raynesia thought that since Shiroe was chosen as a lieutenant of the ambassador party, he should be quite high-ranking in the Round Table Council.

(But he is walking so fast...)

The young girl Akatsuki was following effortlessly behind. Raynesia heard before that the Adventurers were very strong physically, but she never expected to experience this much difference.

The young man named Shiroe covered his ear with one hand and talked to the air as he walked, probably communicating through magic.

They reached a gigantic black building shortly after.

"Shiroe-dono!"

"Charasin-san, sorry for making you come so far."

There seemed to be 3 men waiting in the lobby behind the door, one of them was dressed like a merchant.

"This is Princess Raynesia."

"Hi! I heard about you, the daughter of clan Corwen. I am a merchant Charasin, leader of the 8th District Shopping Center."

The man named Charasin was indeed a merchant as he greeted Raynesia with a business smile. But to Raynesia who came from nobility, his greeting was both simple and practical.

(This Adventurer seems very straightforward and dislikes hypocritical courtesies.)

Raynesia responded with a graceful smile... for her standards, this was a simple greeting. 8th District Shopping Center was a unique name, but from the way he introduced himself, it was probably a prestigious family name in Akiba.

"I am Raynesia from clan Corwen, please take care of me."

The merchant called Charasin blushed and averted his eyes, Raynesia was used to such a reaction.

"And so, Charasin-san."

"Here."

"...Eh, how should we do this, which one should we choose. I was thinking something flashy and grabs your eyes, we need to move everyone with the first impression... Do you have the full set of 'Valkyrie Mail'?"

"Hmmm? Ah, ah ah, of course... but the legs for that set... Will it be okay?"

But this sense of ease did not last too long. The youth Shiroe and Charasin started to discuss something, Raynesia didn't understand the content, but she could not pretend not to hear anything.

"Yeah, no problem. From the overall viewpoint, it will be good if we push it to this level. Please prepare a set, I have the cape so you don't need to prepare that. Can you choose a suitable weapon? A 1-handed sword with a beautiful design, any equipment below level 4 will do... Akatsuki, can you rent a room for an hour, it will be fine even if it is small... No, the attack power doesn't matter, it just needs to look good."

Following that were scenes of shame and confusion.

Raynesia was brought to a simple room. Stripped and adorned with battle equipment with the help of the young girl Akatsuki.

Most nobles changed their clothes with the help of their maids and Raynesia was the same, she didn't resist being naked in front of others.

The source of her shame and confusion was due to her first time wearing battle armor.

Firstly, it was as light as feathers.

Breastplate and a shirt made from thin shiny silver chains.

Gauntlets made of metal and leggings with vines carved elegantly on it as if they were the works of elves.

But the problem was ... the chain armor around her waist.

The armor only covered the tops of her thighs and you could see her legs down to her knees. Showing your arms was a common design for dresses, but clothes that showed off your thighs seemed so vulgar, Raynesia (probably) never wore something like this before.

Akatsuki said simply: "The skirt...I will help you wear." But instead of a skirt, it looked more like a belt with a scarf sized cloth.

(My...my thighs are showing... And the breastplate's shape is so real, how should I put this, it seems a bit inflated...)

As Raynesia was stunned by this, Akatsuki hung a sword on her waist and tightened all the straps all over her body. All armors were skintight after tightening so you would not feel its weight.

From the weight and comfort, this should be a famous magical armor, Raynesia was impressed... But the curves of her body were also showing and she could not bear to watch.

Raynesia thought her figure was not bad, but this set of armor... left nothing to the imagination. Raynesia moaned.

"Erm... Akatsuki-san? If I wear it like this, the curves of my body are a bit..."

"You are tall enough, so bear with it."

Raynesia was too intimidated by Akatsuki's glare to say anything.

Akatsuki took out a comb and straightened Raynesia's hair beautifully. Her actions were more smooth and delicate than any maid's, but Raynesia was only getting more and more tense.

It might be due to her silent nature, but the young girl had been strangely agitated from just now.

Akatsuki grabbed the procrastinating Raynesia and dragged her outside where Shiroe and Charasin were waiting. The 2 of them seemed to have been standing outside and discussing all this time. Raynesia attempted to hide behind the short Akatsuki, Charasin smiled widely upon seeing her.

This expression of lauding from the heart was similar to the knights' and bureaucrats'. But Shiroe seemed to just have the expression of someone

judging and gauging. Raynesia entered Shiroe's name into her mental note of someone to look out for.

"Charasin-san, it is pretty good right?"

"Yes, I think she is beautiful."

"...Thank... Thank you for your compliment."

Raynesia almost pulled up her skirt to do a curtsy but she restrained herself. The cloth she was wearing (she didn't want to recognize this as a skirt) was too short to pull.

"Now, let's proceed to the main event. It will be fine, please relax, I have high hopes for the princess."

Shiroe's words and smile sent a chill down her spine for some unknown reason, but she could only nod now.

Part 2

And so...

"Thank you everyone for gathering here so early in the morning, I am Shiroe from Log Horizon. The time is now dawn, the war is coming upon us, let me explain our situation."

It was dawn.

The city square was full of Adventurers, the numbers were uncertain, but from the crowds jam-packed in the city square, there should be more than a thousand.

Akiba central city square.

The debris in the city square had been cleared in the past few months, it was now 20% more spacious than before the Catastrophe. When Elder Tales was still a game, the debris was just part of the immovable background, but now they could be moved or destroyed.

There were still shops open at this unearthly hour, the stores had been refurbished and looked very clean, making Akiba look more vibrant and lively.

Raynesia did not know these details, she only felt this was a city full of life. The sun had just started rising in the east and yet there were so many people already gathered here. For Raynesia who had not been through any battles, this was an unusual sight.

And those gathered here were not just human knights.

There were elves, dwarves, even carpenters and merchants. Unlike military processions and meetings of nobles, the stalls peddled their food and drinks to the crowds, which seemed to be the norm in this city.

Raynesia did not know the Round Table Council members who had been standing by on shift had made all the preparations after Shiroe contacted them. Gathering the veteran Adventurers, setting up the stage, and parking the 'secret weapon' beside Akiba's riverbank had all been done.

Raynesia who was staying inside the tent next to the stage could only see the Lumiere called by the summoner illuminating the podium.

They were using the valuable mage, the highly respected summoner, as a stagehand. This went against the common sense of Raynesia, but the contents of the speech made her even more lost.

"...Because of these reasons, centered around Sand Leaf peninsula, in the northern hills and forests of the Kanto region, there is an army of about 20,000 goblins. This force is attacking the surrounding areas. There are several Adventurers in Sand Leaf reporting about this attack. The governing organization in Kanto, the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' is exposed to this threat. According to the analysis of the Round Table Council, this threat is just a threat, the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' will not be wiped out if we leave them alone, but will exhaust at least 30% of their total fighting force... this number is equivalent to the destruction of their military, but it is not to the extent of wiping out all the People of the Land."

The report Shiroe was reading out was more detailed than that of the nobles and he was merciless in his speech. If Raynesia was not wrong, his words had hidden poisonous barbs.

But the scene that amazed Raynesia the most was not Shiroe's attitude, but the comprehension in the eyes of all the Adventurers listening.

From what she could observe from the tent, not one person looked bored or confused. Some of them even opened up pieces of paper, probably maps, and were noting down the important points in the speech.

This was a scene that made Raynesia, one of the People of the Land, amazed. Weren't the people gathered here equivalent to peasants? Why did they have so much comprehension skills?

Raynesia thought that the Adventurers gathered here were just common soldiers, but their comprehension level surpassed that of officers, and was on par with the bureaucrats of the courts. There were so many people with military and geographical knowledge, and they seemed to know the political situation of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal', this almost made Raynesia fall down in shock.

What were nobles? What were peasants? What were farmers?

The worldview in Raynesia's heart had been shattered.

"On the other hand, we feel that defending Akiba from this army is something simple...apart from food, this city is very self-sufficient and even more so in terms of technical knowledge. We have enough defense capabilities, it is not necessary for us to aid the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'. In terms of gain and losses, we do not need to help them, let me repeat, we absolutely do not need to send aid... I hope everyone will listen to the words from this 'person' while keeping this in mind."

It was as though everyone present gulped.

When many people gather together, they would create a certain warmth. In the heat of the silence, Shiroe looked to the tent and pointed to this 'person'.

"Ah?"

Someone grabbed Raynesia's hand while she was stunned.

She turned around and saw Krusty in a sky-blue armor, she was not sure if it was for ceremonial or practical use. Krusty had his usual gentle expression and smiled as he said: "Let's go on stage."

"Eh? Eh?"

"Come."

Krusty dragged her out of the tent and a sudden bright white light shone onto the city square.

It was the light of dawn, the first ray of sunlight in the morning illuminating the whole square from the east.

In the cool morning breeze of the summer, Raynesia was suddenly pushed forward.

This was the center of the stage, the forefront where there was no escape.

Raynesia felt hot as she came on stage and did not know what to say or do. In front of her were several thousand Adventurers, a being that was different from the People of the Land. Even if they had the same form and language, they were fundamentally different creatures.

She could feel this from her short contact with them.

Her lips were trembling, her knees were losing strength.

A sharp sound came from her right.

She turned and saw Krusty with his calm appearance like a heroic guardian angel. He stuck his two-handed axe into the floor and placed both his hands onto its handle. The sound just now was the axe hitting the floor.

This was followed immediately by a dull thud from the left. Shiroe who moved here was holding a ceremonial pewter staff that was taller than him vertically like a spear. Shiroe didn't have the staff a moment ago.

With Krusty and Shiroe on either side of her, Raynesia took a step forward on the stage. Her temperature was rising gradually, the scenery in her eyes was changing its shape, but her thoughts were unexpectedly clear. Her breathing was so loud that it irritated her, and she could strangely hear the conversation of the Adventurers chatting softly in a corner clearly.

"...Everyone, this is my first time meeting all of you, I am one of the People of the Land. I am a resident of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal', the daughter of the Corwen clan governing Maihama. My name is Raynesia Elart Corwen, I came here bearing a request for everyone."

Her voice was so clear she surprised herself.

Raynesia's words reached every corner of the city square in the morning air.

"Just as Shiroe-sama described, Yamato is facing a great crisis. I announce without any reservation that the guardians of Yamato, the 'Knights of Izumo' are missing right now. The 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' will need to handle this crisis themselves. The goblin invasion force is the biggest ever in history, and they are advancing fast. They are already within the sphere of influence of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'. The People of the Land have city walls, magic barriers, and soldiers, but how effective our defenses will be is still an unknown. Even at this moment in time, my fellow People of the Land are polishing their blades and fortifying the walls in preparation for war. But even with all these efforts, we cannot avoid making major sacrifices to protect our homelands."

Raynesia threw her gaze far away.

What she saw was not the crowd before her, but the scene a few hours ago.

"It might sound shameful, but the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' has not come to a consensus even at this critical stage. Before I arrived here, they were still arguing selfishly for the safety of their own territories and were reluctant to send aid to each other. Not only that."

Raynesia hesitated at this point.

But she was unable to stop.

"Not only that, we are wishfully thinking about pushing the holy task of defending our homeland to the Round Table Council's ambassadors. We were scheming to rely on the immortal Adventurers, rely on everyone here for help, hoping to use everyone's battle power to protect our lives and territories. I am not worthy of apologizing on their behalf... But I am deeply sorry, and I also feel remorse over one more thing. The thing is, I am here today to raise the same willful request."

Raynesia did not notice the bright purple cape and 'Valkyrie Mail' that Shiroe chose complemented Raynesia's feminine features to the limit. Raynesia under the dawn light was the image of a valkyrie that everyone respected and adored.

Raynesia did not realize this.

When she made her plea to the Adventurers, Shiroe turned his head slightly and gave Krusty a look. Krusty gave a bitter smile and an expression of resistance.

"Both the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' and I do not have much to offer in terms of rewards... Everyone is living in such a prosperous city, I do not know what to prepare to give as thanks, and I don't want to use worldly items to exchange for everybody's freedom. But as a daughter of the Corwen family, I love Maihama deeply and have the obligation to protect my nation... that's why... I have come here before everyone today."

Deluding themselves with wishful thinking and only thinking of protecting their own interests was indeed shameful.

Raynesia fell to her knees naturally and gave a deep bow.

If the Adventurers present were knights or bureaucrats, or in other words nobles, she wouldn't lower her head this way. In the culture of nobility, a lady was treated as a valuable item, a noble lady of high status was their top protection priority.

But she learned one thing after knowing Krusty, the Adventurers were not the same.

With her title, she would also be respected as a noble in Akiba. But she would not have a group of people attending to her needs which was the norm in nobility culture, she would at most receive the 'respect' of the people on the street.

This was a heterogeneous city.

She would not receive the princess-level of attention she was so used to in this city. But she would also not be discriminated at all like a lady in a noble's social circle.

The woman in the social circle of nobles did not have rights.

She was treated kindly, would receive all sorts of gifts, and be given numerous compliments and hollow words of admiration.

She just needed to frown slightly and the young knights would present her with the most valuable medicine. But they were seeing her as an individual to adore.

They were just after her as a 'noblewoman', a prize in the diplomatic battles among the nobles, that's why she was treated with care.

A 'noblewoman' was treated like a gem in the noble's social circle, she was a 'noblewoman' who came with a guarantee of high pedigree, she was just a top-class trophy.

Raynesia who spent her days brooding in her room was more aware of this than anyone else, and she understood that she was powerless to deny this fact.

"I am cowardly and lazy, an ignorant vase... but... I want to go to the battlefield, so, if you are able to, if it is fine with you, will you be willing to go with me? Are you willing to help me based on your kindness and freedom? I wish to do all I can to protect the 'Freedom of the Adventures'..."

(Even if I say that...Even if I want to protect their freedom...)



She was a member of the Corwen family, but she did not have such authority because she was born a girl. She could plea with her father or grandfather to buy clothes or jewelry for her, she could grant testimonials to one or two Adventurers and she could hold dinner parties.

But she had no further political powers.

Raynesia also thought she was giving an empty promise.

But instead of saying it was a lie, it was more like her aspiration.

Krusty was the first one to acknowledge she had the freedom to take to the battlefield, Adventurers probably had never doubted the freedom of doing this. Raynesia wanted to protect their freedom. For Raynesia who never had such freedom all these years, this was the first time she had such an aspiration in her heart.

"I sincerely ask everyone to help me."

As she finished her speech in a whimper, there was a loud wave of iron clashing. In the middle of the city square, a group of people in blue with a coat of arms on their cloaks clashed their weapons and shields and stomped their feet.

A company of knights in black armor unsheathed their swords and swore to take to the battlefield; on the open balcony of a ruin a band of elves with bows on their backs sounded their war horns; dwarves holding axes howled mightily in the crowd.

Werecats, wolf fangs, foxtails, and other minorities did not seem to be discriminated in this city.

(Ah...)

Krusty walked to Raynesia's side while she was stunned, Shiroe was at her other side the next second.

"And so, this city... We will be sending out our first expedition army, the condition for enlisting is level 40 and above. This is a quest given by the Round Table Council, there is only one reward, the gratitude and respect of this People of the Land onstage. Comrades who are willing to take up the quest please ride for Maihama! Considering the crisis of this situation, we will also be sending a blitz force against the enemy. The formation of

parties will be done while on the move, I hope everyone will cooperate. I am Krusty and I will be the commander-in-chief for this expedition army."

"The role of tactician will be taken by me, Shiroe. Within 15 minutes from now I will be contacting the blitz group through telepathy. The members who receive the message please head downstream of Akiba to Akiba River and the experimental dock. 'Ocypete' will be waiting for you there... For the members who do not receive the message in 15 minutes, you belong to the main expedition force, please head to the registration counter situated at the city's east gate to collect your quest forms. You can proceed as instructed after being registered on the friend list of the registration staff. There will be instructions for the formation of parties while you make your way there, the preparation time is 15 minutes, please give me your utmost support."

"Ah, ah..."

An army of a thousand soldiers howled in front of the speechless Raynesia.

"Why are you acting so lost and panicky?"

"How... How can you say that, as a gentleman... As a gentleman..."

Raynesia's voice was trembling as she couldn't find the words to say.

The city square was full of the noises of armor clinking and people talking, the words that shouldn't be heard remained a secret... Except for Krusty.

Krusty extended his hand gracefully like a noble. He and Raynesia were full of suspicion, overexertion, and mutual understanding as their eyes met. But to the bystander, they were the perfect couple smiling beautifully at each other.

Anyway, the expedition plan had been set.

The enemy were the goblins that were moving towards the ruined capital Eastal from Sand Leaf peninsula, numbering over 10,000. And so, Akiba formed an expedition army for the first time, heading straight for Sand Leaf peninsula.

Minori's group headed towards Choshi in the morning.

They were exhausted both physically and mentally, but their expressions were still spirited.

Although it was only one night, the tense hours in the darkness sapped the energy of the 5 people in Minori's group. The consecutive battles from Ragranda forest until now had made them gain several levels.

After going through multiple fights, their teamwork gradually became more polished. They could sometimes understand what their comrades were thinking even without saying anything.

The 5 in Minori's group were more relaxed walking on the farm trail than staying in the forest, but they did not let down their guard, watching each other's back and blind spots as they surveyed the surroundings, but they maintained a peaceful atmosphere as they advanced.

(I am still scared when I face battles, but...)

Minori might be scared, but she was no longer fearful.

Real fear was the feeling of dread flowing in your veins, making you over-cautious and let go of your life, this feeling was almost the same as giving up.

In this world without death, giving up was equivalent to death. But inversely speaking, you would still stand a chance as long as you didn't give up, even if it was shameful, even if you were shivering, there would be a chance for things to get better if you stood up and fought.

It was a bit late to call this morning.

It should be close to afternoon.

"Hello...! Hello...!"

As confirmed by telepathy earlier, Naotsugu's group was resting in an empty space behind the trees.

In this alternate world, dirty equipped items will become clean automatically when they were repaired. All sorts of items had a set durability, its wear and tear was insignificant when you used it normally. Since it was insignificant, the visual cleanliness would correspond

directly... This was the logic behind the equipment becoming clean when it was repaired.

But since there was a set durability value, if you used the equipment roughly, the value would drop. Armor and weapons would gradually wear out after long periods of battling, so there was a need to send it to the blacksmith for repair periodically.

The 4 in front of Minori were all veteran level 90 Adventurers, they were several times more powerful than Minori. They took advantage of their might to charge into the center of the pillaging goblin group to disrupt them and conduct guerrilla warfare.

The formation centered around 2 swashbucklers must have battles much fiercer than Minori's group.

"Doing okay? Hi Tohya, did you protect everyone?"

"Teacher Naotsugu, I did!"

Tohya gave a standard bow while Naotsugu rubbed his head.

Serara pounced at Nyanta.

Minori gave a simple report to Shouryuu and Rezarick of their encounters last night, the two of them gave a sigh of relief and helped to check their equipment and wounds. Shouryuu aside, Rezarick was a cleric of a major battle guild and Minori thought he would fault them for acting so willfully. The care and concern of these two made Minori's heart feel sweetness and remorse.

They were not hurt, but they were running low on supplies.

Minori was afraid they might run out in the midst of battle.

The goblin pillagers' attacks diminished like the receding tide as the sun rose from the east. They should understand their own characteristics, numbers, and the effect of night raids.

Minori's group retreated to the area near the town as the enemy forces backed off.

"Let's stop resting and return to town, I can only relax after seeing it myself."

The cleric Rezarick from Black Sword Knights said with a serious expression. Everyone nodded in respond and headed for Choshi.

The bloody night was just over, but the summer morning sky was as blue as ever.

The strong sea breeze unique to Sand Leaf hit their faces, blowing through the farm from the coastline.

The scene in the distance and the field in front was dazzling under the bright sunlight. The shadows of beaches and the beach trees fell on the farm trails, making a beautiful picture of contrast.

After walking a distance, they started to see the corpses of goblins. There were groups here and there, seemed like the adventurers battled the goblins last night.

"Seems like she has made arrangements here, as expected of the big-breasted Neechan."

Naotsugu said happily in a soft voice.

He was right, Minori did not think they could protect Choshi with their guerrilla attacks alone. Minori's companions as well as Nyanta, Naotsugu, and others formed guerrilla parties last night and battled the goblins on that hill. Using the element of surprise and the advantage of night vision, they did what they could to reduce the number of goblin parties, a brutal guerrilla tactic.

By reducing the number of goblin parties, the pace which the goblins would attack Choshi would slow down, and it would be a manageable pace... This was the strategy Minori came up with.

Minori did not know the professional term, but the goblins were using saturation attacks, using their overwhelming numbers to break the defenders' formation and tactics.

For instance, if it were 1-on-1 or party-against-party, even if they had the slight advantage in number, the Adventurers would be able to prevail with their superior battle power.

To counter this, the goblins sent out many small parties, so many that the Adventurers could not handle all of them. The Adventurers would of course fend off many of them, but there would be gaps because of the disparity in

numbers, and the goblins just needed to concentrate their forces on the gaps to break through.

If they went through the gap, they would be able to savor the fruit that was Choshi, they could also commit arson and cause confusion, disrupting the Adventurers' dominance, making them choose between returning to town to fight off the raiders or to continue fighting the goblins in front of them.

They could then pick off the confused Adventurers one by one, this was the traditional tactic the goblin tribes had always used.

But Minori's party took the initiative to strike the goblins first at a place far from the town.

The proposer of the tactic, Minori, had a very simple thought.

Goblins did not have a base they needed to protect, Minori had one. And Choshi did not have city walls and was easily infiltrated, this was a weakness that would put them at a disadvantage.

...Since that was the case, we should also fight in a place where we wouldn't need to worry about our weakness.

This was a simple and naive conclusion, they would need the capability and courage to do this but Minori's group was insistent on executing this tactic.

The goblin forces were diminished by Minori's tactics, but they still proceeded on the night raid as planned, and Choshi was indeed attacked last night.

But their plan was just to reduce the goblins' numbers. A large number of goblins had to stay alert from ambush or to take another route, taking longer than planned to reach their target. This caused the goblin army to attack the town while their forces were not all in place.

The feature of a saturation attack was to focus all their forces at one point, forcing the defenders into a situation where they were unable to respond effectively. The goblins who missed the chance to gather and muster their forces still proceeded to attack Choshi under the orders of their leader. But their tactic evolved into each unit attacking separately by their time of arrival, making them the perfect prey for the Adventurers.

If it was this type of unorganized attack, even the relatively weak and outnumbered Adventurers would be able to handle them.

Maryele who was convinced by Naotsugu in turn persuaded the members of the training camp to defend Choshi, and was welcoming the dawn victoriously.

"Welcome back...!"

"Woah woah, Welcome back...!"

"Are you tired?"

Adventurers that were familiar with Serara and Shouryuu greet them as the group entered Choshi. The 2 of them were responsible for taking care of the beginners in Crescent Moon Alliance and knew a lot of people. Nyanta, Naotsugu, and Rezarick also exchanged information with the other veteran adventurers.

The road that had been compacted tightly over the years of treading showed no signs of being ravaged.

The goblins failed to invade the town.

"Hey, we made it!"

Hearing the proud announcement of her brother, Minori looked up and saw Tohya grinning widely like a kid in the sun.

Minori felt warmth in her heart looking at his smile.

Her brother maintained his bright and cheery mood through the night and Minori also smiled naturally, happy that she protected Rundelhous. Tohya extended his fist and Minori bumped it with hers.

"Minori...! The People of the Land are letting us rest at their hotel! We are taking turns to rest! We can't let down our guard yet!"

"We should be grateful for their hospitality that we can at least wash our faces Miss Minori, Tohya."

Isuzu and Rundelhous shouted from across the street. The twins walked towards them, their footsteps springy under the summer sky.

Part 4

The prototype steam-powered transport ship 'Ocypete'.

The ship was made originally by putting a steam engine on a big paddle wheel ship to experiment with the possibility of transporting large amounts of goods, so the cargo space on the 'Ocypete' was very abundant. Compared to the paddle wheel ship in the old world, the steam engine here was more elaborate in design. There was no need to store fuel as it was powered by salamanders conjured by summoners, a unique feature of this ship.

A paddle steamer was a steam-powered ship with giant wheels akin to watermills on either side of the ship. The steam engine turned the two wheels which in turn paddled the water and moved the ship forward.

A propeller ship was better than a paddle steamer in terms of performance, being more efficient in converting energy to moving energy.

But taking into consideration the difficulty of making parts and installation, they concluded that they were better off making a paddle steamer at this phase and had been working on it since.

Paddle steamers lost to propellers in terms of efficiency, but they could operate in shallow waters, suitable for river operation.

Prototype steam engines on small boats had been completed just a week after the formation of the Round Table Council and they completed the prototype 'Ocypete' paddle steamer in another two months.

The 'Ocypete' was ferrying about 130 Adventurers. It may be noisy with people, but the ship was big enough so it wasn't overcrowded.

Raynesia stood alone on the deck near the ship bow. She had traveled by ship before, but this ship moved differently from a sailboat. The way it cut through the waves was strange to her but it was very fast.

The Adventurers around her were resting in their preferred positions, or moving around to make preparations. Their outfits varied, but about half of them wore cloaks with the same coat of arms as Krusty, so they should be from the same clan.

Raynesia was feeling blue.

She was not seasick. She was familiar with ships of all sizes as a granddaughter of Maihama's governor.

She was gloomy and feeling remorse over her reckless behavior.

(I said something like that again...)

She found it troublesome and was shy and lazy by nature, so why was she putting on such an act at this critical juncture? It might be the effect of her education to be a perfect lady, but she was troubled about this no matter the reason.

(It has been crazy since last night, a woman barging into the nobles' meeting and causing a commotion, shaming grandfather and all the nobles, conflicting the mind-reading monster... and running away together... and was held by him on the back of the griffon...)

Raynesia couldn't help twisting her body as she recalled the warmth inside Krusty's arms.

(That's not what I meant... And I came to Akiba and was forced to wear such shameful clothes. I am still wearing them now... And I gave that speech...)

She held her head with her hands.

She couldn't believe herself.

But from her view, she insisted on obeying the proper etiquette.

She was a People of the Land, different from Adventurers... She heard about this from her grandfather and others, understood this premise, but she really felt the true meaning behind it when she was at that scene.

Raynesia had never seen any group with so many knights with the intelligence of bureaucrats.

She knew people like this were called heroes.

There were 'Ancients' in this world who were both skillful in swordsmanship and possessed the magical powers of a sage, so there were no problems if there were other talents in this world. She could not find suitable words to express it, but the strange thing was 'such talented people suddenly numbered in the thousands', and this strange group were the Adventurers.

The nobles' congregation believed that if they played their cards right and lured them with nobility titles and rewards, they would be able to negotiate with the Adventurers. She thought that they misunderstood the nature of the Adventurers, they possessed such intellect and wealth, how could they negotiate with their offers of status and reward?

The nobles were wrong.

The irritating but comfortable interaction with Krusty and experiencing that speech made Raynesia understand this clearly.

Jewelry and invitations to dance parties would not motivate Raynesia to act, she just wanted to wear her cotton pajamas and lazily eat and sleep all day. It was the same for the different life-form known as Adventurers. Gems, golds, titles, and territory could not be used as rewards. If that was the case, the only way was to plead with them for aid.

(Because I am a girl, I have no education regarding politics... So it can't be helped right?)

Even if it was a small thing, keeping and following through a promise would earn their trust.

If the Adventurers faced dangers, she had to bear the same risk.

This was the way Raynesia came up with to accumulate trust.

(But even so...)

(Saying something like 'I want to go to the battlefield' was too heavy a promise, have I gone mad? Or is it because of this set of mysterious... clothes that bare my thighs so much?)

She wanted to squat down, but her long years of education made her think that she had to stand gracefully with her back straightened in the public with so many pairs of eyes around. This instinct was deeply rooted in her body, not allowing her to relax.

After that young man Shiroe with the evil smile instigated her, she had become like this. This vicious method almost made her cry.

"That is the struggling look of someone 'regretting blurting out that speech in the spur of the moment but is unable to take it back'."

"Eh!"

Raynesia jumped as if she was electrocuted as Krusty came out of nowhere and said these words that blocked out the sound of the wind.

"Fu fu fu, there is no such thing Krusty-sama."

"Your face is cramping up."

With her follow-up lines sealed, Raynesia could only look out to the ocean with her 'depressed' expression.

"Seems like you are losing patience."

"...Wooo, anyway, you are correct... But don't misunderstand alright? I am not regretting this, I have to come personally to plea for help since I am asking them to risk their lives and accompany them to the battlefield. No, I don't think my life is worthy enough to request the aid of 10 Adventurers, that is, about this, this..."

"That's alright, it is enough..."

"Ah?"

At that short moment, Raynesia felt something different in Krusty's expression as he said these words. But the announcement by the ship crew that they had arrived pulled her back to reality from this feeling.

...So fast.

Even if it were crossing the gulf, they were able to ferry more than a 100 knights to their destination in the afternoon, that was way too fast. It had only been about 15 minutes since they traveled by sea.

The familiar 'Cinderella Castle' of Maihama was before her eyes.

The paddle steamer seemed to be docking at the pier.

The Maihama citizens working at the dock were in a state of panic, probably startled by the gigantic black ship. This could not be avoided as the citizens did not receive any news in advance.

This was normal.

This was the society of the People of the Land Raynesia had always known about.

An army where everyone had a personal long range communication device, was literate, and able to understand the content and objectives of battles, that was weird. If the people working at the docks were Adventurers, they would be able to understand the reason, purpose, and follow-up plan of this ship.

Just like that time when Raynesia landed in Akiba on the griffon, the preparations would have been made.

But the Maihama Raynesia resided in was not like Akiba. As the sole People of the Land on this ship, Raynesia felt the obligation to calm her people.

Krusty guided her to the bow of the ship to wave to the people. The Raynesia right now was nothing like the princess who was lazy and disliked the crowds.

Part 5

Meanwhile, a tactical headquarters supervised by Shiroe was commanding the expedition main force.

The strategy that Shiroe and Krusty were adopting was not 'steady advancement', but 'speedy and imperfect'. No one could predict the future movement of the goblin army in the center of the archipelago, but if they ran out of food on the hills, they would obviously raid one of the towns. They were currently unable to ascertain the goblin army's main target, so Akiba did not have the initiative.

The choice of where to fight lay in the hands of the enemy which was a disadvantage.

Speed was the most important thing to gain the upper hand in this situation.

Fortunately, the zone between Maihama and Akiba was relatively flat in this alternate world. The only problem was where to cross the river as they traveled southeast from Akiba.

Predicting that the route was relatively safe, Shiroe decided not to muster the troops and move out together, opting to let Adventurers who were ready to party up and move out immediately.

The tactical headquarters was a communication network formed by Shiroe, Charasin and 10+ others.

They were sorting the Adventurers who enlisted by their guilds and also registering independent Adventurers to the network as well.

The headquarters used this network to receive reports and disseminate information speedily. The network didn't take long to set up. After confirming the interest of a guild to take part in the operation, they would request for a representative of the guild to set up a communication network, and the headquarters staff and the representative would add each other to their friend lists.

The blitz group that already left, the main expedition force, and the reserve supply company had their own communication networks.

This expedition army possessed perfect communication that had never been seen before, the current problem that Shiroe's headquarters was facing was how to party up this strange expedition force.

(We need to come up with a name list by levels... This step is hard to make while they are on the move, so we should set a rough destination for them to gather.)

The first destination was around Matsudo in the old world, situated north of Maihama, the start of the hilly region... a place between Akiba and Maihama. According to Shiroe's knowledge of Elder Tales, there were many abandoned buildings there, a terrain not suitable for battles.

But they had no choice if there were no suitable zones to choose from.

From reports received through telepathy, 'Ocypete' had docked in Maihama and the blitz group was moving to the abandoned port of Narashino under the guide of a few People of the Land.

The blitz group under Krusty's command had 96 people.

A party was made up of 6 Adventurers, a 'Full Raid' consisted of 24 people, a 'Legion Raid' was formed by 4 'Full Raids', this 96-people group was the biggest fighting unit in Elder Tales.

Krusty may look like a gentleman wearing glasses, but he was actually the leader of the biggest battle guild in Akiba and Japan, a charismatic raid commander.

He fully understood the tactical importance of speed in this war and would continue to press on without rest after reaching Narashino.

Shiroe took a map from his pack while riding his horse.

The abandoned port of Narashino was about 25km away in a straight line from the central forest where the goblin main force was. For a normal knight in this world, they would need to take 3 days to reach there. But with Krusty's speed, they should be able to engage them tomorrow morning.

The main expedition force was going by horse instead of sea, so their formation was pulled very long which could not be helped.

(The low-level personnel should make camp about 5km north of Maihama...)

Analyzing the surrounding terrain of Maihama, remembering the characteristics of the zone, and choosing suitable grounds, this camp would be centered around the low-level Adventurers. They would need to organize themselves in a defensive formation and maintain border security, and would also be a resupply point so it needed to be big enough.

Midoraunto Equestrian Garden.

His finger stopped at this place marked with a small green oval. If Shiroe recalled correctly, this was an equestrian garden that looked like a big sports arena. There was much wildlife in the surroundings, but there were no heinous monsters, an ideal location.

"Communication team! Please help me to relay, the first destination of the army moving north will be Midoraunto Equestrian garden! The secondary company will go along the coastline. When the advance party arrives, they are to post sentries, set up camp and clear away the debris!"

All kind of possibilities flashed through Shiroe's mind.

He looked highly focused, giving off a cold atmosphere like glass as he adjusted his glasses.

(The battle this time trends toward lightning-fast engagement, there is no need to be too concerned with the supply line... The number over here is...)

The expedition's main force that Shiroe was commanding was about 1200, about 10 percent of all Adventurers in Akiba. If you took away the

production players, the participation percentage of fighting Adventurers would be about 20%.

Including Shiroe, no one here had any experience fighting in a large-scale war with more than 1000 people. But Raynesia's speech had definitely set the spirits of many Adventurers ablaze, much more than Raynesia imagined. The party that just overtook Shiroe had high morale and fighting spirits in their eyes.

The duty of Shiroe was to keep morale up, avoid all kinds of obstacles and guide them to victory in battle.

There were some who say that you could learn from your failures. But Shiroe thought they would not learn anything if they failed in this expedition.

The confidence and glory of Adventurers, the weight behind their words in this world, living in this world, and their acceptance of the governance in Akiba. All these elements demanded that Shiroe obtained victory.

There was no room for failure.

And the fact was 1200 people were enough to gain victory. Using Soujirou's words, each of them just needed to defeat 10 goblins.

Shiroe was responsible for dealing with any unexpected hinges, guiding the 1200 Adventurers to the front-line and pointing where they should expend their fighting spirit.

(It is 10km to Midoraunto Equestrian Garden... we can reach it in the afternoon without rushing, we should make camp here. I should detail half of them to border security and do a wide area search for signs of the goblins. I will then lead the other half to follow Krusty-san's example and attack the goblin main force. Another way is to leave the defense of the city to the People of the Land and bring the whole army uphill...)

...Shiroe simulated all the possibilities in his mind as he spurred his horse on.

Part 6

Krusty was advancing faster than the upper limit of Shiroe's predictions.

After meeting and looking through the Adventurers on board, he had already organized everyone into groups.

Organizing sounded easy, but was hard to do.

For instance, all spells would naturally have ranges. Healing magic had the range of 20m on average while the largest range for the support songs of bards was also 20m.

Only allies within range would receive buff support and healing. A group of people who could battle within this range was the concept of a 6-man party in this world.

Inversely speaking, the unit party was based on cooperating within this 20m range as its main principle.

If that was the case, all parties would need at least 1 tank and 1 healer.

A 'Full Raid' formed by 4 parties also needed to arrange themselves by this principle to maintain balance.

It was the same for a 'Legion Raid' formed by 16 parties. If there were 24 healers, they should not band them into 4 parties of 6 healers.

On the other hand, this didn't mean that all parties should be composed with the same well-balanced team.

As they may run into different situations, they would need to add variety to the parties to handle them.

For example, if all parties only had 1 healer, the tank may not be able to withstand attacks from powerful monsters. It would be best for parties battling such powerful monsters to have 2 healers, or even 3 to be safe.

From another angle, if there were no parties with more damage dealers, there would be no units to take out the enemies like a sharp blade during critical moments, and the fight would become a battle of attrition.

If all the parties were composed similarly, they would lack the ability to adapt.

If the party did not have excellent teamwork, they would not be able to perform to their full potential.

Taking into account that members of the same guild worked better together, it would be better to put them in the same or neighboring party. The famous veteran Adventurers would be able to work elegantly no matter which party you slotted them in, making them useful wild cards.

Apart from the class and abilities of each Adventurer, they also needed to consider their experience and their suitability for command.

Even in the most basic 6-man party, the key to teamwork in battle was to communicate with each other, this was common knowledge to the veterans.

For a 24-man 'Full Raid' group, the complexity and confusion would increase as well, so who would do what? Should they focus on healing or attacking? Where should they position themselves? They needed to make judgements like this during battles, so each party needed to elect a leader to execute the plan of the 'Full Raid' captain.

For a 'Legion Raid' battle, the 'Full Raid' captain would need to take orders from the 'Legion Raid' commander, you needed a high level of concentration and experience to maintain this chain of command in the heat of the battle.

When Elder Tales was just a game, there were very few quests that required a 'Legion Raid' to accomplish, as it was difficult to gather almost a hundred veteran players within the given time-frame. The teamwork training for the 96 players would be too hard to imagine.

The obstacle for challenging 'Legion Raid' quests was too high for regular players, since most players could not do the quest, the company would not focus on developing them.

The 'Legion Raid' quests were too difficult, only suitable for the few high-level veteran players to challenge, so those who completed them would obtain extreme wealth and fame, but the challengers were very few.

D.D.D was a guild that had been challenging this type of high-level content since the time when Elder Tales was a game. Guild Master Krusty of D.D.D was one of the group of less than 20 players on the Japanese server who had actual 'Full Raid' command experience.

He used this experience expertly to organize the time with a surprising speed. The personnel arrangement looked random at a glance, but it made perfect sense if you studied it.

Krusty's group that disembarked from 'Ocypete' had been split into the 96-person blitz group and the 12-man Raynesia protection and surveillance group. Krusty learned the main points of the terrain in the surrounding area from the People of the Land, added the details to his military map and marched the group off without hesitation.

The 'Full Raid' groups had been assigned a number from 1 to 4. They reached Sand Leaf peninsula in the evening, their goal was 24km west of Kasumiura.

The blitz group from Akiba advanced on horseback to conserve their strength, the parties taking turns to lead the group. They moved like the wind through the deteriorating roads of past centuries.

Like a flash of black lightning piercing through Sand Leaf.

Onward! Onward!

Krusty's blitz group was speeding ahead like an arrow, going straight to the heart of the enemy forces.

CHAPTER.



CHASE THAT BACK

[あの背中を追いかけて]



▶ NAME: SOUJIROU

▶ LEVEL: 90

▶ RACE: HUMAN

▶ CLASS: SAMURAI

▶ HP: 13624

▶ MP: 6807

▶ ITEM 1:

[DIVINE KATANA - KOGARASUMARU]

A POWERFUL PHANTASMAL-CLASS SAMURAI WEAPON. VERY DIFFICULT TO ACQUIRE. NOT ONLY IS IT VERY POWERFUL, IT IS AN AI TYPE ITEM THAT CAN SUMMON THE PERSONIFICATION OF THE SWORD WHICH ACTS AS SUPPORT DURING BATTLE.



▶ ITEM 2:

[DRAGONFLY BEADS OF TEN-THOUSAND NATURAL CALAMITIES]

AN AMULET THAT ACTS AS A TALISMAN AGAINST EVIL AND CHANGES COLOR. REWARD FROM THE QUEST "QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS NIGHT". PROVIDES HIGH RESISTANCE TO MOVEMENT INHIBITION ATTACKS AGAINST THOSE BELOW LEVEL 80.



▶ ITEM 3:

[WARRIOR ARMOR OF THE NEW EMPEROR]

SAMURAI EXCLUSIVE ARMOR WORN BY HEROES IN ANCIENT TIMES. PHANTASMAL-CLASS ARMOR WITH VERY HIGH PHYSICAL DEFENSE, ALONG WITH VARIOUS STATUS BONUS. ITS SPECIAL ABILITY IS TO ABSORB CURSES.



Name: Soujirou

Level: 90

Race: Human

Class: Samurai

HP: 13624

MP: 6807

Equipment

Divine Sword - Kogarasumaru
A powerful Phantasmal-class Samurai weapon. Very difficult to acquire. Not only is it very powerful, it is an AI type item that can summon the personification of the sword which acts as support during battle.

Dragonfly Beads of Ten-thousand Natural Calamities
An amulet that acts as a talisman against evil and changes color. Reward from the quest "Questions and Answers Night". Provides high resistance to movement inhibition attacks against those below level 80.

Warrior Armor of the New Emperor
Samurai-exclusive armor worn by heroes in ancient times. Phantasmal-class armor with very high physical defense, along with various status bonuses. Its special ability is to absorb curses.

Chapter 4: Chase that back

Part 1

After Raynesia left, the meeting had an atmosphere of chaos and exhaustion. The senate leader of the Round Table Council left with Raynesia, followed by Shiroe who the nobles saw as a politically moderate tactician.

The only envoy of the Round Table Council left was the hardliner hawk Michitaka.

The nobles didn't know where to throw the clenched fist they held up in the air. No, holding fists up in the air was still fine, whether they could throw out the fist was another problem. Those who were willing and able to pick up the pieces had already left, the group didn't know what to do.

Following Krusty 's departure, the pitiful Baron Craindit lost his ability to moderate the meeting, his face alternated between green and red, even his attendants were unable to help him. In the end he begged permission to leave as he walked out gasping for air.

Even if they were not at the level of Baron Craindit, all the nobles should have a certain degree of the Baron's confused emotions.

As it had come to this, the meeting ended temporarily.

Michitaka sighed as he walked to the corridor.

(This is going to be troublesome.)

Michitaka might be the guild master of a major production guild, but he was not proficient in negotiating the details. He thought a merchant just needed to produce quality goods and sell them at an appropriate price.

(And I am a blacksmith...)

He still saw himself as an active blacksmith, he had been wielding his hammer everyday even after joining the Round Table Council. With the drop in players raiding high-level dungeons, there had been a drop in the supply of high-level magic ingredients which made him sad. But this type of problem could be solved by managing the supplies strictly.

He was made a leader by his comrades because he liked to socialize with others and wouldn't reject conversing with others. This was how Michitaka judged himself.

The nobles saw him as a hawk, but Michitaka only yelled angrily at a certain idiot once, he did not bear any hostility towards the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'. He only opposed sending military aid because that was his assigned role among the three, he did not oppose this personally.

...But he was a production player, he had a lower risk of dying compared to the battle players. Even if there were a war, he and his guild should be responsible for the resupply and support role of Akiba, so how could he agree to wage war so easily? He couldn't deny that he felt a sense of guilt over this.

(...The situation has already progressed to this stage, I am just ranting.)

His thick and strong fingers reached through his black hair and scratched his head. He felt low-spirited and unable to let go.

Michitaka was followed by a male attendant, walking down an empty and long corridor. He casually looked towards the balcony as he turned the corner. There was no hidden meaning behind his action, he was just turning his head after seeing the moonlight on the floor.

"Soujirou-sama, is this egg dessert tasty?"

"Soujirou-sama, please listen to me too!"

"Soujirou-sama seems tired, let me sing you a gentle lullaby and let you rest for a while..."

There was a luxurious couch in the balcony under the moonlight, a place suitable for tea parties. A colleague of Michitaka, West Wind Brigade's guild master Soujirou was being surrounded by princesses and maids of the People of the Land, making Michitaka feel a sense of desolation.

The dark clouds were hanging over the future of Akiba, his sense of guilt, an inexplicable feeling of unease, all these things he was thinking about didn't seem to matter anymore.

Compared to the sight and atmosphere around Soujirou, everything about the Round Table Council and the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' was colorless and boring.

(Ah ah, the expression on my face probably looks like a graffiti drawn with a left hand.)

Michitaka did not approach Soujirou and headed towards the zone where his bedroom was.

(That's it for tonight, what should we do tomorrow?)

Michitaka thought so, but he found that the development that followed would be complicated.

Duke Corwen, grandfather of Raynesia, was waiting at the rest area in front of the Round Table Council's zone. The old duke was accompanied by a single knight as he bowed to greet Michitaka silently. The long meeting must be tiring on his body but he showed no signs of fatigue, which earned Michitaka's respect.

The elderly Duke simply said: "Is it convenient?"

Michitaka realized what he meant and led the way.

He invited the Duke to a small meeting room, this was where the Round Table Council... Krusty, Shiroe, and Michitaka held their usual meetings. Small was only relative to the size of the whole palace, 2 such rooms would be big enough to be Michitaka's home back in Japan.

Michitaka ushered him to a seat and took out tea from his Bag of Holding to serve. The old Duke looked surprised, but someone like the Duke definitely knew about Bags of Holding, so Michitaka didn't understand his amazement and decided to ignore it for now.

"Sorry to disturb at such a late hour."

"Please, don't mind me, if we don't clean up this mess of a meeting, we won't be able to sleep well."

"Hahaha, indeed."

The elder nobleman stroked his grand beard and laughed without reservation.

"The Corwen family must not fall because of the reckless actions of my granddaughter."

He was in a very delicate position right now.

Duke Sergead was the chairman of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' and commanded great influence. But right now this influence was becoming a negative burden.

"As you have judged, it is possible that the girl's actions fractured the relationships between the league members."

His words hinted at the doubts the other nobles had of clan Corwen. Maihama was a strong city under Sergead's governance, if he pulled in a few other counties and allied with Akiba, their power would be strong enough to subjugate the rest of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'.

Raynesia did not harbor such grand ambitions. The Round Table Council including Michitaka also thought all the events leading to their present situation happened at the spur of the moment, and there were no hidden meanings behind them.

But in that kind of situation, the most important thing was how others interpreted it.

Even if there were no hidden motives now, it might be significant in the future.

(Even this conversation might be interpreted as some sort of conspiracy...)

"Speaking of possibilities, Maihama might lean towards allying with the new rising force of Akiba?"

Michitaka asked directly, he was not good with testing the waters or scheming.

"That might work too, ermmm... What do you think Michitaka-dono?"

Michitaka resented being addressed as lord during the meeting, so the Duke made a good impression on him by addressing him as "-dono". Michitaka had no grudge against the word lord itself, but this elderly man was wary about using terms that might anger Michitaka, which made him want to continue negotiations.

(But I am not as talented as Shiroe...)

Michitaka moved his thick neck to tilt his head.

There was the gentle sound of door knocks.

After Michitaka gave permission to enter, Henrietta entered pushing a cart of snacks. The envoy reinforcement requested by Shiroe included chefs, and they had been preparing all sorts of dishes to complement all the meetings and parties in the Round Table Council zone of the palace (they had been working their asses off).

These snacks and beverages had been arranged for by Henrietta.

"Ah ah, you came just at the right time Henrietta-san, please join us."

"No, I'm just here for..."

"Ay, please don't hold back."

Henrietta frowned at Michitaka's invitation, but she took a seat besides Michitaka after setting the table.

"You are the lady who danced with Shiroe-dono at the party correct?"

"Yes, I am Henrietta from Crescent Moon Alliance."

"Crescent Moon Alliance is one of the 11 guilds that forms the Round Table Council, this lady is the guild tactician."

Michitaka took a breath after finishing his introduction.

He did not intend to dump all the responsibility on Henrietta, but this meeting was too important and Henrietta should be able to look out for Michitaka's blind spots and hint the direction the meeting should take.

But first, they helped themselves to the snacks.

Cold-cut chicken sandwich, warm veggie salad, fruits, and diluted alcoholic drinks.

They chatted casually while enjoying the food.

Michitaka and Henrietta gave a brief summary of where they stood, Sergead described the streets of Maihama, the topics took a detour before coming back to the main topic of the night.

"I have a general understanding of what you meant... let me think..."

Henrietta gracefully put down her teacup and said.

She continued expressing her views to Sergead who looked like a kind gentle grandfather.

"I think the most important starting point is Duke Sergead's long term plan, I think we can come to a consensus with that."

Michitaka grunted.

This was a simple conclusion. The painful and confusing 5 hour meeting could be summarized in this one sentence, how pathetic. But he should be thankful for Henrietta's intelligence and capabilities instead. They say 2 heads are better than 1, but Michitaka understood from his experience on Earth that such meetings would seldom yield the benefits of brainstorming.

"You are right, hmmm...."

Duke Sergead closed his eyes.

"It might be wrong for me to say this, but we won't make any progress if we keep testing the waters. I want to use this opportunity to find out your straightforward views and what you wish to achieve for your side."

Michitaka added.

He did not want to be treated like a cat or a dog, but this old man would treat him with proper respect. If the chairman of the league also acted this way, there would be no point in further discussion.

"To start, I would like for your aid to defend against the goblin army and to exterminate them. In our long years of battle with the demihumans, protecting this land that nurtures us is our top priority."

Michitaka agreed with him.

Nobles who did not want to protect their people and lands were not real nobles.

Instead of being a goal or condition, this was akin to the premise of their discussions.

"Next, I will not be inviting you all to become the 25th member of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'."

This stunned Michitaka.

"Right now, I feel that treating the Round Table Council as another fortress or territory's feudal lord is the reason for our failure. I do not wish to exclude or keep a distant from the Round Table Council, to put simply, I have come to realize that the Round Table Council is an organization that is equal to the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'. The Round Table Council and Akiba are able to rival the whole 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' in both their structure and strength. We the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' are an alliance of all the feudal lords while the Round Table Council is made up of clans... I remember you call them guilds? It is a council made of guilds, the two of us are very similar. You might only have just one city, and we have the preconception that one city is too small and underestimated you. We have been making rude and one sided requests, I want to apologize for our impudence."

Michitaka considered Sergead's words.

"That's the way Akiba is, their influence does not match its territory. If we force Akiba into the frame of the League, problems are bound to arise and will end up hurting or ending the League. Even if we succeed in putting a bell on the neck of the wolf, there is no way we can chain it, it is even more impossible to do that to the griffon flying in the sky. I think the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' and the Round Table Council should be on equal standing, that is the best relationship for us. We need to sign mutual non-aggression treaties and open up trade routes and use this as a basis of our relationship."

"No problem."

Michitaka's reply made Sergead eyes open wide.

"The Round Table Council has no ambition of fighting for territory or harboring any intention of invading other territories. We just want to protect our home in this world and realize our own dreams... a way back to our old world, and we will be content. For this, we need to live in this world in the meantime, we need to visit the ruins and relics all around the world, we will also need to trade for food and resources. To achieve this goal, it is not

necessary to alienate our neighbors, being able to work together is a good thing."

Michitaka replied in one shot and looked toward Henrietta. Henrietta frowned for a moment and added:

"This is a very possible but rough policy correct? Even if we announce that we will be on equal standings, we need to see the content of the treaties and confirm to what extent we can honor them before we can make any concrete promises."

Michitaka nodded and agreed to the words she spoke a little bit too fast.

He was hoping that Henrietta would watch out for such details.

Duke Sergead was speechless for a while, stunned by the speedy response and sincere attitude of the 2 of them.

"But since we are dealing as equals, signing a treaty of non-aggression... meaning we will not attack each other, and to maintain our relationship as trading partners. Sorry to be blunt, but the countermeasures of the goblin attack would not be included in this treaty correct? I am not using this as an excuse since we have not signed anything, but for Maihama and the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal', dealing with the goblins is a matter of grave importance correct?"

Both Michitaka and Duke Sergead nodded and agreed on Henrietta's point.

The topic went back to this point in the end.

The burdens on the People of the Land and the Adventurers were not the same.

Their positions and views differed, making them distant.

"Let's not talk about this for now."

Michitaka shrugged as if to tease the increasingly heavy atmosphere.

He was thinking about what Soujirou was doing, just remembering that scene made him feel silly for thinking so seriously.

The Adventurers had limitless powers, the People of the Land envied them and had to resort to schemes? The dirty side of politics made his heart heavy, but after looking at Soujirou and his harem, everything seemed to not matter anymore. It was an experience that made you lose strength in your legs. No matter if it were envy, anger, or doubts, they were all easy to comprehend in comparison.

In the end, Michitaka did not need to burden himself to this extent.

"The parties involved, Krusty-dono and Princess Raynesia are not present, so it might be inappropriate to say this. They might have some concrete plan on what to do, so it is unfair that only we have to rack our brains. We need to include Shiroe-dono too and make the 3 of them think about it, that is the correct distribution of labor."

Michitaka's view was a bit crude, but the other two also felt the same.

Even if they came to a consensus or their negotiations broke down, the events had already been set in motion. The troops from Akiba should be moving out at dawn, neither Michitaka nor Duke Sergead could stop them.

Since both Krusty and Shiroe were on it, there was no way they would fail.

They had always been successful in achieving their goals when they took matters into their hands.

For Michitaka, this was a guaranteed result.

So they could only wait and see how things turned out.

"Shiroe-sama will think of something."

Henrietta pouted as if she were angry and her words seemed to belittle Shiroe, but her eyes seemed to be full of confidence. Michitaka grunted in agreement.

"And so, I will let my granddaughter shoulder the responsibility for this incident."

Duke Sergead's teasing words concluded this conversation.

Part 2

(What was that noise...? Just in the bushes under that tree... Could it be... Could it be goblins?)

Beside Raynesia was a female knight wearing the conservative military costume from D.D.D. Instead of weapons, she was holding a map in one hand and several reports in the other, talking nonstop through telepathy.

"A big group at 2 o'clock, a strike team at 9 o'clock, total of 18, 2 giant beasts."

The sound of simple reports, different from the style of the knights, not like anything she had heard of.

When Raynesia's eyes were not used to the dark and she was feeling scared, this lady rubbed some balm gently on her eyelids. Raynesia was able to see after blinking a while, her vision was clear and the surroundings had a rose colored tint.

But the sounds from the dark were still scary.

This was not deep in the mountains or valleys, but Raynesia grew up in the city and lacked resistance to this type of environment. She shuddered at every movement in the dark bushes.

(Calm... Calm down, I need to be strong... right, stay calm...)

Her emotions were still intact.

She could not lose the grit to move on.

But her body was more honest, she was tense and shivering as she felt her life was in danger. She mobilized all her strength from her years of education as a lady to push on, but the cat was almost out of the bag.

"Princess Raynesia, if we go further up the ridge, we will be able to have a better view, we will rest when we reach there."

The female knight informed her.

The warriors around her seemed to know of this arrangement as they changed their formation smoothly. Only Raynesia and two People of the Land stood blankly in the middle of the formation. The two of them provided details of the geography to the female knight when she queried them. There was a small stream ahead you could cross in one stride, a

short climb after the river would lead you to the rocky region, there was a platform there where you could see the whole valley.

Raynesia's group bashed through the vegetation and advanced.

The leading warrior would clear the bigger branches, but the sharp and thorny undergrowth was still in the way. But Raynesia's 'Valkyrie Mail' was quality armor, akin to an invisible barrier of air protecting her.

(The performance is great, but this is really...)

She was concerned with exposing her thighs.

If it were winter, she would be able to wear a long cloak using the cold as an excuse. But she could not do that in the summer, Raynesia was wearing a thin cape that only reached her waist, she was reluctant to even call it a cape.

(Ah...)

She had unexpectedly walked a long way while thinking about this. Going around a cluster of tall beech trees and up the slope the height of a man, the view became wide and open. This was a rocky platform 6 meters wide and you could see the mountain ridges and valleys from here. The river and forest under the cliff were also visible from here.

There were countless lights dotting the area, probably the torches of the goblin army? The lights squirmed and wiggled like a procession of evil bugs.

"Please take a seat."

The female knight ushered her to a foldable field chair. It didn't have a backrest or armrest, but she was grateful to be able to sit and close her legs.

Raynesia thanked her politely and borrowed the seat.

Raynesia understood from that speech that Adventurers and the People of the Land were fundamentally different. Not only Krusty and the Round Table Council, she had to be prepared that everyone had the upbringing and courtesy on the level of nobles.

So she could not forget to show courtesy and gratitude in her behavior.

But the Adventurers seemed to dislike empty formalities, was her expression of gratitude adequate? Raynesia observed the female knight, she seemed to be busy studying the map and talking through telepathy, so it should be okay.

The Adventurers around her took out foldable equipment, including a 3-legged table and several tubes that were probably telescopes.

"It begins."

"Ah?"

The moment Raynesia turned at the knight's words, a flash of light fell into the valley, followed shortly by a loud explosion and their surroundings shook because of the tremor. The female knight pointed into a corner of the dark valley with her white finger guiding the confused Raynesia.

Raynesia focused at that area and felt the faraway scenery that was glowing become bigger. She could even make out the shape of the trees and leaves.

"This is 'Fairy Balm' used for sniping, the view from the distance looks very clear right? Please avoid pulling your focus too far... It is starting, please watch this closely."

That white flash was only for an instant.

The lightning strike right at the center of the goblin group, the bright hammer that fell from the sky was more like dynamite than an electric attack, the explosion blowing the goblins away.

Raynesia could see Krusty's body clearly in the bright flash of light, he wielded the double-edged axe twice the height of Raynesia agilely, his tall body moving swiftly in the forest.

In the wake of Krusty's path, about a hundred people followed him along the stream. It felt like the cape fluttering on Krusty's back was elongating and corroding the whole forest.

They struck at or pierced the goblins without mercy upon contact.

The flashes of light every now and then should be magic spells. She could not tell from this distance, but they probably had overwhelming destructive power.

But, compared to the unstoppable charge of the group, she had more interest in Krusty himself.

Leading his men from the front, guiding the knights with his back, Krusty was emitting a strange air. The different emotion she felt back on the ship deck had taken physical form and was rampaging through a mountain of corpses.

He was smiling with his lips the shape of the crescent moon.

His eyes squinted with joy.

The glasses reflected silvery lights.

Krusty rampaged in the battlefield happily, like a child rushing around in a festival.

He swung his hands.

His axe was like the wind, you could not see its tip.

A 3-meter wide vacuum suddenly surrounded him.

Some monsters attacked Krusty occasionally. A wolf the size of an ox charged at him and Krusty stopped it with his left hand while he sent out an order. Dozens of arrow and several swords strengthened by magic pierced through the wolf immediately.

The beast turned into pieces of meat in Krusty's hand. He tossed it aside causally like a wheat bag and shifted his interest to the next group of goblins.

Ominous.

Eerie.

A disgusting feeling of fear.

But in Raynesia's eyes, this scene felt very sorrowful.

It was ominous and eerie because this was how Raynesia interpreted it. But to bear such thoughts for a warrior protecting her homeland, Raynesia thought that was a shameful thought.

But what about the feeling of sorrow?

Why was there a feeling of solitude?

"50 ahead, 2 hill giants, healing team stand-by at the side, start destroying the small teams from the outside."

She could hear bits of the female knight's conversations.

Raynesia opened the eyes she closed unconsciously, 2 colossal giants the size of siege towers were approaching Krusty from the front.

"...!"

A club as thick as a tree struck downwards, Krusty handled his two-handed axe like a dancing sparrow and positioned himself between the two giants. To Raynesia, the giants with their devastating size could crush Krusty in an instant. But the smile on Krusty's face deepened with no signs of fear.

Krusty swung his glowing red axe at the giants and they retaliated furiously focusing only on Krusty.

The two giants fell into a frenzy and attacked Krusty relentlessly in a fury, Krusty seemed to be barely hanging on and defending.

These two should be the secret weapons of the goblin attacking squads, a large number of goblins equipped with stone bows and spears scattered around them. But the 'Legion Raid' Krusty was leading seemed to stop holding back and attacked at will.

The 'Legion Raid' divided roughly into 4 and each splinter group split further into 4 parties, spreading out and taking on the goblins, surrounding them from one side and flooding the goblins in the forest.

The movements of the Akiba army was fast and flawless, the goblins without a well-defined command structure could not match them and was cut down one by one in the dark by sword or sorcery.

From Raynesia's vision enhanced by the Fairy Balm, their dancing figures rushed through the forest.

Krusty was in the middle of the dancing formation.

He swung his hand down like a conductor.

A volley of fireballs like a burning avalanche swallowed the group of goblins.

Krusty looked so elated.

He had so much more freedom than his time in the palace.

This made Raynesia sad.

Raynesia didn't know why she was sad and lonely as she watched Krusty.

He swung his axe with all his might, cutting open enemies, blocking attacks. Both his arms were bleeding but his footwork was strong and steady, Krusty's heroic command inspired the troops like a god of war.

The Krusty in Raynesia's eyes was so free that he might just turn transparent and disappear into the morning light.

(This...)

This was a sorrow that weighed heavily in her heart.

The invincible and strong Krusty in both the palace and the battlefield seemed so fleeting to Raynesia, making her wonder if there was anything wrong with her mind.

Krusty seemed so delighted, but the end of this happiness was probably emptiness and solitude. This doubt rose in Raynesia's mind.

The blitz group led by Krusty continued their advance in the forest.

Raynesia who was watching all this straightened her back, following the back of that burly Adventurer with all her heart.

Part 3

Maryele's group used the fisherman's warehouse by the Sand Leaf River as their temporary base, keeping in contact with the team patrolling around the town, updating them on the situation while coming up with a defensive plan.

There were no goblin sightings for half a day.

The goblins seemed to have pulled back from the forest and the Adventurers were taking turns sleeping in the hotels or this warehouse.

It had been 24 hours since the goblin attack, Maryele's group had successfully defended Choshi during this period.

The more you looked down on the beginners, the more passionate they were in adjusting and helping, Maryele was surprised by this.

She thought this was probably natural.

(These kids joined 'Elder Tales' because of the release of the new expansion pack, this is all new to them, so they will not have any bias...)

In Elder Tales, new players meant characters with low-levels and immature battle prowess. With this kind of disadvantage, the veteran players would treat the beginners as weaklings.

But they did not have any preconceptions of the game, this was their advantage.

When Shiroe revealed that the People of the Land were the same as players, they had personalities, desires, sense, and understanding like humans... this had a huge impact on the veteran players.

But the impact was lighter for the beginners.

They had short contact with the game, they had not grown accustomed to the idea that Elder Tales was just a game. Because of this, they just felt like they had been abducted to this alternate world that had nothing to do with Elder Tales.

Hence, they were more passionate and aggressive about protecting the People of the Land and were serious about actually doing it, this made Maryele happy. The summer training camp beginners did not need much convincing before agreeing to fight and protect Choshi.

Seeing the beginners volunteering themselves, the veterans could not stand by and do nothing.

The summer training camp started out on a voluntary basis, so the veteran participants were all kind and caring to the beginners. Under the passionate and burning eyes of the beginners, the veterans had to put on a brave face and lead them.

On top of that there was the smiling support from Maryele who was not aware of it herself, pushing the morale even higher.

Minori and Nyanta conspiring to go up the hill made her feel hurt, but it all ended spectacularly well. From what Maryele knew, there were 26 defensive actions at the borders that night, about 4 battles per hour. Compared to raiding dungeons, this was a relaxing pace.

The expression of the beginners changed as dawn broke.

Fighting in this world was not the same as fighting in the game Elder Tales, there was another type of hardship. Instead of saying the battle was grueling, it should be the air of the battle that was acrid.

Their bodies inherited the high physical abilities of the characters. Although it might differ from class to class, but stamina, strength, toughness, and agility were not a problem for them. They could heal their wounds by magic, if it was just a scratch, it would recover in half a day without the need for recovery spells.

The horror of fighting was more of a psychological thing.

Even if they were monsters, taking lives was still a terrifying experience, some Adventurers might even be traumatized, Maryele could understand their feelings too.

If they wanted to carry on battling in this world, they must get used to this no matter what. Before the beginners grew accustomed to this, they would need the guidance and motivation from their veteran companions.

In terms of opportunities and motivation, the defense of Choshi was a big challenge for the beginners, it was also a rare chance for them as well.

The first to notice there was something wrong with the ocean were also the spirited beginners. Their high morale would reflect on their fighting spirits and determination, but the most obvious effect was the increase of their concentration.

A trio of beginners on their way to guard Choshi noticed white foam and bubbles in the direction of the coastline and informed Maryele immediately.

It might be their memory of the horror of being assaulted at the beach, but this fear produced positive results this time.

Because they detected them early, the Sahuagin were still on the far side of the beach when the veteran players arrived.

The Sand Leaf River was very wide in this zone and the river mouth connected to the sea. The fresh and salt water mixed with the tides and several piers stuck out into the river.

The veterans groaned as they looked at the surface of the sea, there was a lot of white foam on the surface, the enemy was much more than just 100 or 200.

(This...)

Maryele also felt it.

Choshi was a peaceful town centered around fishing and farming, so their town was built along the Sand Leaf River. Considering the problem with the river flooding and the tides, the residents maintained at least a 100-meter distance from the river, which was very near.

And this 100m was not in the forest or on the hills.

This was just an open beach of sand and stones for the fishermen to pull their fishing boats and tools to shore.

The flank of the town was fully exposed with such a wide avenue of attack, protecting the town from such a large number of Sahuagin was almost impossible.

(No, instead of saying impossible... It is easy for us to survive, we can just run away, we can take them all down if we have enough time. But to completely protect the town and the People of the Land from harm... it is probably impossible...)

But as Maryele was at a loss for words staring at the foam, the sound of bowstrings tightening came from either side of her.

To her right was Naotsugu with Tohya beside him.

On the left was a beginner assassin and many other warriors holding their bows getting ready for battle. Shouryuu who was not proficient with bows

was holding thick metallic needles taking the stance to throw them like knives.

"Mary-san, please say a few words to motivate us."

Naotsugu said with a bright smile.

This smile lightened her mood.

There was no need to worry.

Maryele was always surrounded by a group of reliable and helpful companions. Just this smile made her heart grow wings and flutter.

"I understand, that... Eh, everyone listen up!"

Maryele raised her voice.

The bubbles were squirming even more as it approached the river mouth.



"Thank you everyone for your support! With the help of everybody, there have been no casualties in Choshi and the damage to the farms are kept to a minimum. We successfully fended off the goblins, this is great news. But we are not done yet, we need to defeat the enemy coming from this side before it ends... before we are really done in protecting this town. This is the final battle, please lend me your strength... I believe everyone can do it, yeah, let's go! Move out!"

The bowstrings sounded out loudly.

After 3 waves of sound, Naotsugu led the charge towards the coastline with Shouryuu and Rezarick behind him, Nyanta waved gracefully at Maryele before joining them.

The Adventurers rushed towards the coastline in a line.

But there were a few parties that did not take part in the assault. At the corner of the road farm trail where you had the view of the whole coastline was Minori sitting there. When Maryele looked at her with puzzled eyes, she replied: "We will need to substitute another team soon."

This was a calm observation, and Maryele started to doubt if she was really in middle school. But she had a point, since they would be defending against such a large group of enemies, they would need to plan a roster for resting and fighting.

A fierce fight broke out at the coastline.

If that was the case, Maryele should rest too.

It was very draining for the healers in a long fight, Maryele as a high level cleric would be needed in the coming battles.

Part 4

Midoraunto Equestrian Garden.

Simple defensive outposts were being built and the parties were being formed. After the confirmation of their responsibilities the parties were sent out one by one, so the number still in the camp was only a third of the whole army.

The situation was changing by the moment.

Krusty's blitz group had already engaged the enemy early this morning, from the reports of the surveillance team, they had inflicted casualties of more than a thousand enemies. They would know soon what this figure meant in the whole war.

Shiroe was known as a tactician, but he was not familiar with the military tactics of the real world, so he didn't know if that figure was big or small, or if the goblins would retreat from this loss.

Commonly speaking, if 30% of an armed force was unable to fight, this was as good as a total loss. This was the crude knowledge Shiroe had but he had doubts about it.

Would the goblins flee in a fight? It was possible, but that only happened if there was only 1 left. Elder Tales was a game, the monsters in the game would only attempt to flee at this stage and would never surrender.

Considering this, the 30% rule might not be applicable here, or the military knowledge of the real world might not be applicable in this world at all, or maybe demihumans like goblins did not understand the concept of retreat.

But they also received good news.

Krusty's army managed to defeat giant beasts and 2 giants in the goblin army without much loss. Unless the goblins had other cards up their sleeves, it would be fine for Krusty's army to continue their raid.

(If there are enemies Krusty's army cannot handle, nobody else in Akiba will stand a chance.)

Different enemies had different affinities, if you understood the enemy, you would be able to organize and plan accordingly to take them out.

So even if Krusty's army failed, it didn't mean it was an enemy that could not be defeated. When Elder Tales was a game, they had to go through countless failures and get wiped out multiple times before they found the right way to complete the raid. The intelligence gained would become their strength in the next fight. If both sides were equal in strength, the one with the best intelligence of the opponent would gain the upper hand.

But in the situation with no intelligence, Krusty's army was without doubt the strongest sword in Akiba.

(I will leave the heart of the goblin army to Krusty-san.)

Shiroe placed a black pebble in the center of the map representing Krusty's position, then a white pebble at Midoraunto Equestrian Garden and a green one at Choshi.

Now he needed to focus on Choshi.

He felt great pain when he received the reports of the Sahuagin attacks, but the important thing was if that cape of land fell, the Sahuagin might even make their way to Maihama.

The common thing about all the towns was that they were not built with an attack from the sea route in mind.

Why did the Sahuagin attack?

The reason was unclear, but Shiroe deduced that it had something to do with the goblin invasion, the two of them were probably in cahoots. Maybe the Sahuagin were trying to take advantage of the goblin attack and reap something for themselves. No matter which was the case, the fact they had to fight on both fronts remained unchanged.

(For this portion... We can consider it roughly complete.)

Shiroe toyed with a bigger pebble and put it on the map, its shape looked like a cute seagull with its wings closed, it was placed in the sea.

The prototype paddle steamer Ocypete.

This ship had been utilized to the limit in this war.

After Krusty made landfall, Ocypete waited at the abandoned pier Narashino for another group. They should have linked up by now and was ferrying the 4 'Full Raid' groups detailed by Shiroe towards Choshi.

Ocypete was a cargo ship and was not armed, so it was a leisure ship.

But it was a prototype so the hulls had been reinforced and it went through many strength tests so it had high defense. The Adventurers it was ferrying were the ship's weapon.

The group detailed by Shiroe had a high percentage of summoners and bards. The direct attacks of summoners were not as strong as sorcerers', but they had the ability to conjure elementals to conduct ranged attacks, so they had twice the range of sorcerers. The bards would be able to reinforce the attack spells and reduce MP usage.

What was left was a race against time.

Shiroe held discussions with the various telepathy communication operators that entered the tent, tying down the details of the formation of parties and where to send them.

It was easy to win in this war. But if they destroyed the core of the goblins' battle group causing the remaining goblins to go rogue and pillage the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' towns and cities, it would become a mess.

Shiroe remembered the People of the Land's village he visited on his journey back from Susukino, including the elder and the villagers toiling the land and herding sheep. In this dangerous world, they must have some defense ability, but if something happened to them, it could be argued that it couldn't be helped. But if there was a chance to save them of course they should do that, that was the right thing to do. Fortunately Shiroe was in a position where he could do something about it.

The duty of destroying the heart of the goblin army could be safely entrusted to Krusty, the crucial thing was how to handle the nearly 20,000 goblins after the invasion army dissolved.

Unlike the 'Legion Raid' blitz group Krusty was leading, they needed to organize smaller and more agile groups to surround the enemy, doing what they could to seal the damage within the hill regions. Shiroe was now working on turning this concept into a practical war plan in order to achieve this goal.

The main point of the strategy was to herd the goblins into the central mountainous region of Sand Leaf.

To do this, Krusty was starting from the west and going clockwise, 'peeling' the outer edge of the goblin main force. The goblins were forced to head in the direction of Sand Leaf, if they maintained this guiding tactic, they should be able to herd them to the most optimal position.

Sending out teams to support Krusty's advance and seal the goblins in Sand Leaf, or the sharp end of Chiba prefecture known as Boso peninsula in the real world, the surrounding regions should be relatively safe. This war plan hinged lastly on the defense of Choshi and whether the reinforcements on Ocypete could get there in time.

"My lord is not going to the battlefield?"

Akatsuki who claimed to be his bodyguard followed him here to ask while seated on a cushion in the tent.

"I want to, but I can't leave my work alone, I still need to finish forming the parties... We should see the ending in a day or 2, I will go then."

"I see."

Akatsuki nodded.

Shiroe was one of the griffon riders that numbered less than 200 in the Japanese server, its speed could only be rivaled by a red wyvern.

Leading the march through the hills would take a lot of time, but if Shiroe needed to move by himself, he could get to Krusty or Choshi in 30 minutes.

There were 2 reasons Shiroe set his base here.

First, he could relay his orders to the whole army speedily with so many communication operators around.

Second, the situation of the war changed rapidly, Shiroe wanted to stay between Krusty and Choshi so he could rush to either side if there was a need.

Shiroe was still setting up the communication networks for the whole expedition army.

Once he finished it, this expedition force would be gathering veteran Adventurers, and they could proceed with half-autonomous battles. A leader would command each party to keep communication with headquarters on a vertical level, as well as other parties on the horizontal level. A communication operator would be assigned to maintain horizontal-level communication between parties. By writing the details of the report received by communication operators on the map, they could convert the situation into a visual format.

The level of strategy and tactics Shiroe was thinking about was nothing impressive.

It was similar to how he planned his schemes.

Sorting the intelligence and visualizing it, looking for abnormalities and analyzing it, if there was any point of interest, utilize it by sending out orders. The strategy Shiroe was thinking about was just the combination of investigating and commanding.

And similar to now, most of the work was dull and boring, Shiroe ranted that he was totally a bureaucrat now.

The shout of a communication operator filled the tent and broke Shiroe's train of thought.

"Shiroe-san! Choshi's summer camp group is under attack by Sahuagins, there are only 60 Adventurers, but there are over a thousand Sahuagin, they are critically outnumbered!"

"Request the Ocypete to move at full speed! Ask Charasin-san to come here, the formation of parties needs to be completed, we need to complete the communication network in one day... no, half a day!"

Shiroe opened the documents full of scribbles and annotations, and explained briefly what he expected would happen in the future to the dozen or so communication operators, his voice unwavering.

He needed to complete the communication network as soon as possible.

Shiroe bit his lips and thought hard.

Part 5

"Huff... Huff..."

Regulating his breath while taking water from his backpack to drink.

Shouryuu lay on the ground exhausted as Naotsugu covered him and looked out for enemies, smiling bitterly as he thought about how critical the situation had become.

Naotsugu, Nyanta, Shouryuu and Rezarick were catching a breather under a pine tree a short distance away from the coastline, but you could not say they were really resting.

The battle had gone on for 4 hours since the morning, the bright summer sun shone at the beach where grueling consecutive battles were taking place.

This was the 3rd time Naotsugu's group was resting, but they took a 10-minute break the other 2 times. The Sahuagin had many landing points but the Adventurers were few in number, so they needed to run up and down the entire beach and river bank to fight. To build an effective defense net with so few people, the teamwork between the parties was important. If the Adventurers concentrated on one area, the Sahuagin would slip past them from the gaps.

If that happened, Choshi behind them would be attacked.

They had already asked the mayor to hide the People of the Land in the most sturdy building in the town, the men should be armed and ready to fight.

But the town had no walls, so the resistance of the townsfolk against the Sahuagin would only delay the inevitable of them being overrun.

Three beginner parties were fighting continuously at the edge of the water. In the eyes of the level 90 Naotsugu, they had many things to improve on but they were still putting up a good fight.

But there were many breaches in their defensive formation which was in danger of dissolving, which was common for most mid-level players.

This could not be helped, their skills and range were much inferior to Naotsugu's group. Another thing they lacked was the high-quality items Naotsugu's group possessed.

Elder Tales had a item lock system, most high level magic items needed to be locked before it could be equipped, and only the Adventurers that they had been locked to could use them.

The concept was the same as customizing the item for personal use, the locked item could not be equipped by others, so it wouldn't be stolen or

sold. It would not be lost when you died, and it could sometimes unleash hidden powers.

Level 90 Adventurers from normal guilds would have several high-level magic items. For veteran players like Shiroe who engaged in high difficulty raids, they would have dozens of high-level items or even legendary items.

These magic items were not only superior in attack or defense, they may have unique abilities as well, there were some that could change the performance of the player's skill.

For instance, Naotsugu's sword 'Chaos Shrieker' could increase the range of his taunting skill 'Taunting Shout' from 10 to 15 meters. The convenience of 'Taunting Shout' would also change.

Mid-level Adventurers did not have the support of such powerful high-level weapons, so they could not match the high-level players. Since the items were locked, they were unable to loan it to them.

The worried Naotsugu wanted to stand up but Nyanta stopped him from his back.

"Our job now is to rest nya."

Nyanta warned sternly which was rare for him.

Naotsugu, Nyanta, Shouryuu and Rezarick had depleted their MP. Unless they were supported by some special effects, their MP recovery rate during battles would be insignificant. If they returned to the front-line now, their formation would be broken instantly because of the lack of MP.

When they were fighting the goblins on the hills, they could hide in the shadows and rest periodically. But this battle could not be done at their pace, they needed to take turns with limited time to rest in order to stop the attacks of the Sahuagin.

Naotsugu's group could last longer than the beginners, but they still had a limit. This level 90 group only had the MP to last for an hour.

The group was 2 members short of a full party, so they needed to give 50% more effort to work as a team.

"Please take this Naotsugu-san."

"Sorry for the trouble."

Naotsugu drank the potion Rezarick gave him, this blue potion could recover MP but the effect was poor. There were many ways to recover HP in Elder Tales, but there were relatively few ways to restore MP, and the recovery amount was limited. These potions might be expensive but the effects were limited.

Naotsugu watched Tohya's battle anxiously.

The young boy ran on the beach waving his blade to attract the aggression of the Sahuagin and attack them repeatedly.

Tohya had grown strong.

His skills and execution were still rough, so his technique did not become better. But he was stronger, and he didn't need to rely on techniques for now.

One of the necessary elements for a warrior was spirit. It was the spirit of determination and fighting spirit, a positive attitude and mettle you bore in order to reach your goals.

Tohya had spirit when he fought, an irreplaceable quality for tanks. Naotsugu thought that to protect your comrades, you must have the will to break a glass door with your bare hands and possess the brave soul that was not afraid to bleed.

(Tohya has so much potential...)

Shifting his gaze, his comrades were a girl named Isuzu and a sorcerer called Rundelhous, he remembered that Isuzu was a bard.

She had technique unlike Tohya. Her positioning and attacks reflected her exquisite sense of rhythm and gauge of distance. The untrained eye wouldn't be able to tell her dexterous technique, so even relatively experienced players might think of her as an inconspicuous Adventurer.

But she used her support skills to bring the party's attack, defense, mobility, and recovery to another level.

Her teamwork with the young sorcerer was worth mentioning. Her position and timing of support seemed to meet all the expectations of the young

man. She used all sorts of actions to protect the sorcerer with low defense from harm while ensuring he had a clear view to attack the Sahuagins.

The young sorcerer who was being supported was full of spunk. Sorcerers had naturally high attack, for Adventurers of the same level, they ranked along with assassins as the class with the most attack power.

But the attacking young man seemed to rely more on his emotion than the natural performance of his class, giving a sense of desperation. The lava balls danced and smashed the enemies, the ice spears skewered the Sahuagins as he was channeling his obsession into his magic.

And the young girl Serara who had a thing for Nyanta.

She was starting to evolve too. When he met her for the first time in Susukino, he could see her speed and decisiveness in casting spells, now her movements were even smoother. She did not only think about healing now, she would also summon the spirits of nature to fight or use support magic to help the party.

She would become an excellent healer

Lastly was Minori.

Minori was probably the only one who was fighting the Sahuagins from a different viewpoint. Naotsugu got goosebumps from the feeling she gave him.

The party changed formation on her command and reestablished their duties.

"Rudy-san, suppression attack!"

"Alright Miss Minori!"

"Serara-san, I will take over healing, please concentrate on attack!"

"Casting 'Icicle Ripper' to the left!"

Naotsugu knew what she was doing.

He had been partners with Shiroe for many years, so he knew.

She should be trying to grasp the MP consumption of all her allies, she needed to be familiar with all the skills she and her allies had in order to do

this. Not only how much MP it consumed, but also its effect and the condition for it to be effective.

Furthermore, she needed to manage her comrades' teamwork and the relative position of the enemy, even the order of battle and the priority of each enemy.

Put simply, she was turning the sentence 'destroy enemy' into an essay called 'battle', and reconstructed this essay into a story known as 'tactics', and was in the process of 'reading'.

The battle was in real time and there would be all kinds of things happening at the same time. The 'reading' here was changing the battle into immobile words, but to confirm all possible futures, 'reading' it while improvising the 'story' on the fly.

It was still very crude, but Minori was imitating Shiroe's 'Full Control Encounter'. This petite young girl was chasing Shiroe's back.

Using 1% as a unit, forecast 30 seconds ahead.

That was how Shiroe described it.

This sentence meant that he could envision the battle 30 seconds into the future and grasp his allies' remaining MP with an error of 1%.

In high-level battles, understanding the environment was a basic principle and Naotsugu could understand this point. When he was fighting on the front-lines, he could gauge about how much MP his teammates had left, but only to the extent of full, enough, half, waning, danger, empty, these 6 levels. Mid-level player probably could gauge 2 levels of enough and not enough, if it was just your own MP it should be easy, but to know the MP of your allies of different classes was difficult.

When Elder Tales was a game, the events that could happen were more or less scripted, you could anticipate the monster's action after you got used to it.

Shiroe's 'Full Control Encounter' was not only grasping the remaining MP of your allies. He would also know all the remaining resources of the party and the enemies, looking at the battlefield from a bird's eye view and controlling everything by his will.

When Elder Tales became an alternate world, the unpredictable elements in battles were more significant. It should be impossible for Shiroe to maintain his 30-second forecast, but Naotsugu hoped he could still do it. Because Shiroe was not joking or boasting when he said 'Using 1% as a unit, forecast 30 seconds ahead', it was something he said after researching and mastering it.

Naotsugu only heard about the details because of his long-standing friendship with Shiroe. For Naotsugu who was focusing on the enemy at the front-lines, he knew this ability took a lot of effort for Shiroe to master, but he also felt that this 'sense' was akin to superpowers. Naotsugu could only understand the sentence 'destroy enemy', but he could not compose it into an 'essay'.

But the Minori in front of him was chasing Shiroe's back.

(How many seconds into the future can Minori see... What % is she using as a unit to gauge her allies? 20%? Or with her low level, is she already proficient enough to do 10%...?)

Just as Naotsugu thought it was time to take over for the beginners, there was a sharp shriek in the distance from the direction north of Choshi. This was a unique attack skill of a druid... 'Shrieker Echo' being activated.

Naotsugu's reaction was slow by half a beat.

He didn't know why the shriek came from the direction of a farm far from the Sand Leaf River.

Minori's group at the front line returned to Naotsugu's side like a gust of wind.

"Teacher, we will go!"

"Please take care this place!"

"Ha ha ha! We will handle things over there! Move out!"

"Eh... Nyanta-san! Good luck!"

The 5 of them retreated from the coastline and headed north leaving the battlefield to Naotsugu's group. The figure of them running under the summer sun looked like swallows flying straight into the sky.

Shouryuu and Rezarick knew that they had to fill the gap left behind by Minori's group and rushed over. Naotsugu looked at Minori with a perplexed face, the young girl was drenched in sweat but her eyes shone with determination.

"The spirit alarm Serara set in the hills went off, the goblins are probably attacking again. Since they are goblins, we should be able to handle them... My party has a bard, so we can fight for a long time, so we are more suitable for this battle... So Naotsugu-san, please take care of things at the beach!"

"Minori!"

Minori waved her hand to acknowledge Naotsugu.

They ran into Choshi and Naotsugu lost sight of them.

Part 6

The one leading the way was Rundelhous.

He had been focused since the morning, his magic attacks seemed to be stronger.

The loot they found in the depths of Ragranda Forest was appraised by the high-level players to be a magic item named 'Magician Gauntlet'. It could be equipped at level 25, a common equipment that could be found anywhere in the server, but it was a magic item that Isuzu's group obtained through their own strength.

Isuzu's group looked at this slightly scratched deep-silver gauntlet with magical sigils carved on it as if it were a rare treasure back then. There was only 1 item so they could not share it, but they would feel sad and lonely if they sold it and split the money.

After Isuzu's group talked it over, they decided for Rundelhous to use it. It was an item made for magical attacks, and Rundelhous was the only mage in the party.

Rundelhous was a little hesitant to accept it at first, but he equipped it happily after the group talked him into it.

Rundelhous who was running in front of Isuzu was wearing this pair of gauntlets.

This was a magic item that increased maximum MP by about 5 percent, so it was enough to cast just one more spell. But Isuzu's group understood that the percentage when accumulated would have a big effect in fights. The shimmering red crystal embedded in the center of the gauntlet seemed to reflect Rundelhous' fire spells and his fighting spirit.

Isuzu changed her permanent buff support song from 'Meditation Nocturne' which recovered MP faster to 'Fawn March' which increased movement speed and support skills.

"Thank you Miss Isuzu."

"Slow down Rudy!"

Isuzu pointed out as Rundelhous thanked her. It was a good thing to be energetic, but it was unwise for the mage with armor as thin as paper to be at the front.

"Woo, sorry."

Rundelhous slowed his pace after saying this, Isuzu gave him a bottle from her bag which was filled by the daughter of the innkeeper this morning. There was orange juice mixed in, so it tasted refreshing even though it was warm.

"... Are you okay?"

"Do you even need to ask? The great Rundelhous Code is in top condition as usual, I feel I can take on the whole world, hahahaha!"

Rundelhous responded after taking a big gulp, even though drinking and walking was bad manners (as well as laughing out loud), he did not give off an uncouth feeling.

His big eyes with the corners slightly drooping, his silky smooth blonde hair, his appearance gave an impression similar to a golden retriever, Isuzu smiled.

"You two are such good friends."

Serara giggled, Isuzu shrugged and replied: "I guess so." In Isuzu's mind, Rundelhous was a friendly puppy.

A handsome dog owned by a rich family in the neighborhood with a certificate of pedigree. Because their gardens were next to each other so he also came to visit the Isuzu family, a furry and bushy golden retriever.

Because of its pedigree it was handsome with elegant features, its movements polite and graceful with no signs of crudeness. But you would notice he was an idiot after growing accustomed to him, he would run until he was exhausted playing catch and shake his tail until it hurt, that kind of stupidity.

He would sometimes give overly self-conscious and arrogant speeches as if he had a screw loose or was just ranting off-topic. But he was just displaying his dumb nature so it didn't make her angry.

This dumb puppy was already friends with Isuzu, they were comrades the moment her hands were licked, that's why she could be direct in replying to Serara's teasing words.

"Had enough? Okay."

Her movement of collecting the bottle from Rundelhous, casually wiping it before keeping in her bag was done very naturally.

"Sorry."

"Ku ku ku, Rudy-nii is always apologizing."

"No such thing, right Miss Isuzu?"

Rundelhous retorted Tohya's teasing words, but Isuzu paid them no heed.

"Rundelhous is a mage, so being a bit bossy and looking stupid suits you better."

Rundelhous moved toward Isuzu and rebutted after hearing Isuzu: "What are you saying! What do you mean by stupid! You keep using that word!"

Strange.

This high-school girl from the country with freckles, skinny body, and lacking feminine charms, was treating the prince-like Rundelhous who seemed to have come out of a picture book like a puppy... That sounded too mean, it should be she was treating him like a spoiled middle-schooler with a screw loose.

Objectively speaking, this was a mean thing to do, but Isuzu did not think this way, her teasing interaction with Rundelhous was a relaxing and fun way to spend time together.

Just as Isuzu wanted to bully him again, a 2nd 'Shrieker Echo' went off nearby.

Isuzu's group looked at each other and increased their pace after the turn.

Choshi had an unique shape, the town was built on a narrow strip of land along the Sand Leaf river, the midpoint of that strip was intercepted by a major road leading perpendicularly out. There were other smaller roads branching out from this major road, but they were all short distance bridging roads.

So if they followed the road and turned north, it would be farmland as far as the eye could see. The tomatoes and eggplants swayed with the wind in this season, the maize planted in the spring was a sea of lush greenery.

3-4 shadows were running in the field.

Isuzu immediately cast 'Ballard of the Lazy Znail' and the goblins slowed as if they lost strength in their feet. Just this tiny glimpse of chance allowed Isuzu's reliable companions to attack preemptively.

"Sorry Rudy-nii!"

Tohya shouted as he lowered his center of gravity and bent backwards. This was not the stance to provoke the enemy, but something more aggressive.

With the targets spread so far out, the efficiency of taunts was low, it would take a lot of effort to run around and draw the enemies together.

"Leave it to me Tohya! Let them taste my elegant magic! 'Serpent Bolt'!"

The blue and purple lightning Rundelhous shot out split into several snake-like electric entities and surged through the fields, a preemptive strike by a mage was usually a bad tactic.

There were 8 goblins that emerged from the field, more than expected. Minori at the rear of the formation cast damage intercept magic on Rundelhous instead of Tohya.

The light blue mirror like barrier wrapped around Rundelhous who was holding his staff up anticipating an attack. The first goblin struck followed closely by another enemy with his axe raised high, but their attacks were blocked by Minori's barrier.

Damage intercept spells were the unique magic of a Kannagi, it could be cast on players before battles to offset a fixed amount of damage.

The most well-known spell was 'Purification Barrier', but there were other types as well. The spell she cast this time was 'Protective Barrier', which was 4 times as strong as 'Purification barrier' but it had a very long cool-down, not a skill she could use at will.

(But...)

Isuzu played her note rapidly and thought.

Minori's judgement was correct, Rundelhous had higher defense than Tohya at this moment because of the spell. Rundelhous provoked the goblin with his attack and lured them into the front of the party.

The moment the goblins gathered, Tohya's 'Whirlwind Vacuum Slash' activated and paralyzed the goblins. Rundelhous, Tohya, and Isuzu started to take down the monsters one by one.

Isuzu's party knew the basic tactics after experiencing many battles, and had learned some unconventional tactics.

These tactics were limited by various conditions and were not effective in most situations, but it was very powerful when used under the right conditions, giving them more ways to solve the problems.

This was because...

"How was that Miss Isuzu! Did you see my beautiful magic?"

This dumb young man dragged them all over the place.

Isuzu patted Rundelhous' head with a smile.

The spell was good, hitting the targets from such range accurately. This was not only due to the performance of the spell, but also the long hours of practice by Rundelhous.

Everyone was becoming stronger, so Isuzu didn't want to be left behind.

Part 7

The chaotic battle continued.

The sun was already setting in the west.

In the whole battlefield, only the 5 Adventurers were fighting with their back to Choshi, a solitary defense party. The goblins probably suffered heavy losses the previous night, the parties attacking were uncoordinated and undermanned, the command structure must be in pieces.

This resulted in the attacks being sporadic.

The goblins were not taking any organized actions, they probably wanted to sneak into Choshi under the chaos of the Sahuagin attacks to raid the town.

The short goblins howled nastily as they appeared out of nowhere to attack the town. Minori's group used the farm near the road to the hill to ambush and destroy the attackers repeatedly.

Serara used the druid spell to set many 'Shrieker Echos' all over the place as an early warning system, helping Minori's group to overcome their problem of manpower shortage.

"Sorry Minori, you got anything to drink?"

Minori handed the 3rd bottle over to the moaning Tohya, she already prepared for this situation. When Tohya sat down under the tree by the road, Minori cast 'Instant Heal' on him.

The recovery abilities were activated after the battle. The damages on the armor that were not too serious would gradually fade, Tohya's wound was also starting to heal. But like the sweat drenching his body, the long grueling fights raised his body temperature and he was unable to regulate his breathing for a long time.

Minori was worried, but did not say anything.

She was unable to prepare a few days of vacation for Tohya to rest leisurely. Tohya wouldn't want that too, this was not only Minori's fight, this was Tohya's fight too.

Minori could only give him a handkerchief she squeezed dry.

"Thanks."

Minori nodded to acknowledge Tohya and noticed that her body was heating up too. She looked at her companions, they were all trying to catch their breath and recover their mental strength.

Minori's duty was the Field Monitor, and she was also supervising all the information for this battle. Monitoring all party's MP was Serara's job, but after Minori took over this task, Serara's support, healing, and reaction speed increased significantly.

Minori had to take note of her allies, the environment as well as the enemies information, monitoring the whole battle was a heavier responsibility than it seemed.

(It is still very crude...)

Minori even memorized the MP recovery speed of everyone as she checked their status. During battles, Minori used 5% as a unit to gauge the changes in MP of her allies. She was able to forecast 5-10 seconds into the future based on the rate of MP and HP consumption as she 'read' the battles. Although the accuracy needed to be improved, this forecast had been useful in preventing MP wastage.

Unlike fighting in the dungeons, this was a consecutive battle where you could rest at will, allowing Minori to practice her battle managing skills.

Minori thought this was child's play compared to Shiroe, but Naotsugu would be stumped if he heard these words.

Using 5% as a unit meant she knew the number of times a spell could be cast by her allies, such as enough to cast a mid-level healing spell twice more. This level of observation was far beyond that of a normal level 30 Adventurer. The party, including her, did not realize the hidden talent she was nurturing.

"Everyone, Maryele-san contacted me during the previous battle."

Minori propped herself up and reported.

When Minori was concentrating on battle management, she was on standby mode and treated herself as the reserve unit. She resisted the urge to cast spells repeatedly and focused on observing the surroundings.

Hence, Minori noticed the telepathy call and took it.

"Maryele-san informed me that a special unit from Akiba is on their way here by ship and would arrive in the evening."

"Speaking of evening, the sun is setting soon..."

"You are right."

"Eh, slight delay?"

Minori tilted her head. The summer sky was still bright but the day was coming to an end, it was not a far stretch to say it was evening now.

"Maryele says the reinforcements will be coming by sea and relieve the coastline forces first. They will send help this way right after, so we just need to hang on another 3 hours at most."

Serara and Isuzu's faces became cheerful, Tohya and Rundelhaus remained alert and tense, but they gave off the feeling of a heavy burden off their shoulders.

They had defeated 30 goblins in this half day of fights.

It was not a big number, but the cumulative effects were a heavy burden. They didn't know where in this wide space the goblins would strike and could only rely on the alarm from 'Shrieker Echo' as their clue, playing a game of whack-a-mole in this wide field giving them no time to rest.

'Shrieker Echo' was a convenient alert too but it was not perfect. They worried about the goblins that managed to sneak through the defense net to attack the town. There were a few that made it through, forcing Minori's group to double back and hunt them down.

The party patrolling the borders needed to be close enough to rush back if the enemy broke through, so they could not push their defensive out further.

The good thing was the goblins lost their chain of command. If they had a good commander, they should be able to disrupt their defenses with tactics

such as setting fire to the farm, Minori's group was afraid this might happen but so far they were doing fine.

"Right, when the ship arrives, there will be people here to support as well."

Serara nodded in agreement.

They were suffering right now because they had to fight on two fronts, if the goblins and Sahuagin didn't send big and powerful beasts, they were not formidable opponents.

"Just a bit more, let's give it our all!"

They stood up at Tohya's words.

The afternoon breeze was as hot as a frying pan, but reinforcements would come if they hung on for a little longer. This news was enough to rejuvenate the faces of the party.

After another 15 minutes of patrol, something serious happened.

Minori's party was hoping that they could pass the time peacefully, but you couldn't always get what you wanted.

A sound of a loud smash could be heard on the major road behind them. They rushed back thinking the enemy had penetrated so deep and met with a goblin party with 2 ferocious dire wolves.

Part 8

The battle was progressing badly.

"Don't even think about it!"

Tohya struck again, keeping the wolf attacking Isuzu in check. But this strike allowed the hobgoblin he was suppressing to break free.

After consecutive battles, the party's skills with long cool downs had been exhausted. They still had plenty of MP because of Isuzu the bard, but that was not enough for them to gain the upper hand.

The hobgoblin swung his two-handed hammer like a baseball bat, hitting Tohya in his unprotected flank.

"Tch! Not enough!"

This strike did not produce any cracking sound as it landed on the 'Purification Barrier', it only produced a sound as if it hit thick glass and damaged the light blue barrier around Tohya.

Damage intercept magic could be cast before battles to negate a set amount of damage. If the attack did not break through that set amount, they could prevent any damage to the subject. But if the damage went above its limit, it would break before the effect wore off.

Minori looked at the barrier shattering like glass and instinctively judged it did not offset all the damage.

"Four Side Prayers!"

Minori cast her emergency damage intercept skill in a hurry. This spell was for emergency use, didn't cost much MP and had a short cast time. It cast a barrier on all allies equivalent to 'Purification Barrier'.

But it had a disadvantage.

(... I won't be able to use this again.)

Minori turned pale and bit her lips.

Emergency spells were used in times of great danger and had very long cool down times of 24 hours.

"Stop! Stop!"

Serara cast 'Willow Spirit', the vines on the warehouse wall were guided by the magic and entangled the wolf. The wolf howled in anger and clawed the ground as it struggled to break free.

This was the 3rd time Serara used this spell, The wolves could use their burly bodies to rip the binding vines apart, but her efforts were not in vain. Serara was able to stop one wolf for a period of time for Tohya and the others to focus on the other enemies.

But since Serara was dealing with the wolf, Minori needed to take over the healing duties.

"Didn't you hear me! Don't even think about it!"

Tohya swung his blade with all his might.

This attack using brute force without any technique knocked a goblin into the hobgoblin behind.

The hobgoblin pushed the goblin aside with its massive body and struck at Tohya again.

The hobgoblin was a subspecies of the goblins and was stronger than normal goblins. Goblins were a tribal group, but they were not governed by any laws. They formed an invasion army because the goblin king survived his coronation, but they remained a tribal community, a demihuman group that pillaged and raided others violently.

Another demihuman group based in the south, the evil orcs liked to form armies and nations. In comparison, the goblins were more chaotic.

The hobgoblin inherited the nature of the goblin and was a fiercely loyal subspecies. They were usually more intelligent than goblins and were proficient in using equipment robbed from the humans.

This hobgoblin was the same, wearing pieces of armor and wielding a giant hammer he got from somewhere. A formidable opponent, maybe around level 30? To be honest, Minori's group would have trouble with this hobgoblin alone.

And the hobgoblin had the support of 2 dire wolves and 4 goblins. The reason Minori's group was still holding on was because they were familiar with the streets of the town, keeping a retreat route open so they wouldn't get surrounded. With their high-level of teamwork through countless practices, they were fighting above their battle limits.

"Switch Tohya! Suppress the wolf and the boss!"

But they couldn't fight above their limit for long, and they were getting shaky and on the verge of defeat. If that was the case they should give it all they had and unleash their emergency skills.

Minori charged to the front line with determination.

'Four Side Prayers' cast a barrier the level of 'Purification Barrier' on all allies and the effect would last for another 32 seconds. Minori as a healer would be able to endure the attacks of the goblins within the time frame as well.

Minori made up her mind and rushed forth, she almost lost her footing from her shivering legs. The dusty street under the summer sky seems so fluffy like it was made of cushions. But Minori shook off this illusion and kicked at the goblin in a un-ladylike manner.

"I understand! Miss Isuzu, let's go!"

"Roger Rudy!"

Supportive voices came from her back. When Minori heard the first part of Rundelhous' chants, she knew her intention had been communicated to her comrades correctly.

The goblins laughed maniacally as they attacked and Minori defended with her stance, relying on her barrier to protect her. She only avoided the attacks that came at her vital points, leaving the rest to the durability of her leather armor. She did not dodge the attacks, but threw herself at the goblins before their weapons landed.

(Terrifying, terrifying, terrifying... but!)

Tohya looked at the crazy actions of his sister and began to emulate her to fend off the hobgoblin and wolves.

Even if they managed to intercept most of the damage with the barriers, the battle had gone on for a while now. The twins with dirt and blood all over were enduring the knives of the goblins while the others were exposed to the fangs of the wolves, building up their front-lines.

They used the time earned by the twins to chant.

This was the strongest area attack spell Rundelhous had, it had a long cast time, a freezing spell that would hit for major damage. This was supported by Isuzu's singing.

Rundelhous finished chanting 'Freezing Wind' with Isuzu singing in harmony with him at a higher octave, freezing all the goblins in ice.

Minori retreated from the chilly front-line and checked her allies' statuses. She was unaware of the situation and cast another magic intercept spell in an absentminded manner, she did not look good.

Rundelhous took care of all the goblins, but Tohya had been under attack all this while without support from his sister.

Minori recast 'Purification Barrier' on Tohya, but damage intercept spells didn't recover HP. This was the weakness of Kannagi with the unique damage intercept skills. The Kannagi that focused on preventing damage to her allies was not proficient in using normal healing magic.

Minori had also lost half her MP from her emergency use of spells.

The situation was bad.

The good news was the goblins were gone, their advantage in numbers had been eliminated, bringing the battle to a higher level of balance. Minori cast damage intercept spells and inferior healing magic and instructed Rundelhous and Isuzu to concentrate on attacking the wolf.

... When facing multiple enemies, there were all kinds of tactics to employ. If you wanted to take them by surprise, taking down the strongest enemy would be most effective in sapping their morale. If it went well, the minions would scatter off. If the situation was a fight to the death, the key to victory was to take out the weaker foes to diminish their numbers and manage the damage you took on.

Shiroe's teaching came to her mind.

Minori's brother she was so proud of was bleeding and his face was contorted in pain. But that was the reason for them to focus on diminishing the enemies' numbers.

While Tohya used his blood to solidify the front, Rundelhous and the others needed to defeat the wolf to repay Tohya's efforts.

Minori who followed Shiroe's teaching to the letter began to 'read' the battle.

Knowing the HP and MP of your allies, giving instructions, supporting her friends and creating synergy... Minori was studying the flow of the battle, becoming the wind on the battlefield, giving her all and living in the moment.

But Minori could not predict everything.

Her talent could not compensate for her lack of experience.

Any unexpected event could upset the balance.

The 2nd wolf broke free from Serara's binding spell and charged at Tohya. The two wolves and the powerful hobgoblin broke through Minori's barrier in an instant.

Minori digested the new information and calculated, part of it done subconsciously.

9 seconds... Tohya would die in 9 seconds.

Minori looked at her spell status with crazed eyes, 'Purification Barrier' still had 8 seconds of cool down. But as she had just seen, this level of damage intercept magic could not stop the attack of the 3 foes.

"Don't give up!"

Serara shouted and cast 'Heartbeat Healing', the unique spell exclusive to druids. The healing over time magic should be regenerating Tohya's health over time, but that did not seem to happen.

The rate of damage was higher than the rate of healing, Serara's regenerative spell was only delaying his death.

Re-calibrate.

Re-calibrate.

Re-calibrate.

Minori cast her weak recovery spell and thought furiously. Even if Minori and Serara used all their recovery magic, they could only delay Tohya's death by 35 seconds.

Emergency healing magic and high-level healing spells had been exhausted, the cool down prevented Minori and Serara from using half of their healing spells in their arsenal.

(If this is it...)

A disgusting taste spread in her mouth, an irritating chill went down her spine.

Tohya was a crucial tank, if he fell, the chance of them being wiped out increased exponentially.

Not only that.

Minori felt through instinct the smell of death.

Unable to breath smoothly.

The air seemed to become fluid and could not enter her lungs. Time became rubbery and heavy, frustration and helplessness filled Minori's body.

Too late.

Too late.

She could hear her blood pumping loudly, Minori who was imprisoned by the cold could only watch Tohya's HP drop gradually towards 0.

Time seemed to accelerate to normal speed.

Rundelhous rushed past Minori and slammed into the wolf, forcing both his hands down its mouth.

"Rudy?!"

"Miss Isuzu, leave this to me! I... I am an Adventurer! I won't lose to this filthy dog ahhhh!"

The dire wolf was as big as an ox, its mouth was full of sharp fangs. It could bite off Rundelhous' upper body in one move, but Rundelhous jammed both his hands and shoulder into its throat. The dire wolf stomped its steely limbs and shook Rundelhous around, destroying the walls with his swing.

"Rudy!"

Isuzu screamed as she stabbed her spear into the wolf, but did little damage to its body covered with bristles.

"Calm down Miss Isuzu, as a gentleman... I need to maintain the image of a nobleman..."

Rundelhous was dragged along the road, the dire wolf with its eyes like hellfire blew out its pungent breath in an attempt to force Rundelhous out. But Rundelhous grabbed onto the fangs and refused to let go as he was covered in sweat and mud.

The wolf continued to cough and hack loudly, spewing the smell of the stinging taste of blood into its surroundings. Isuzu attacked with her spear relentlessly as Rundelhous continued to suppress the dire wolf.

"If I let go, this beast... will attack Tohya, even Tohya... cannot handle... all three of them..."

Absolutely right.

Tohya escaped his fate of death because Rundelhous threw himself into the fray. The damage he was taking lowered, the situation was changing for the better.

"But Rudy!"

"Isuzu! We are damage dealers!"

Rundelhaus looked like he was offering his hands as he dug deeper into the wolf's mouth. Wolves were canine, because of their body structure, it couldn't attack others if they didn't spit out the thing in its mouth.

"But..."

"Attack them!"

Rundelhous shouted and started chanting as if he didn't want to waste his breath. His arms were hurt badly, just two pieces of meat connected to his shoulders. But he forcefully willed his hands to gather magical flames as Rundelhous chanted his magma ball magic. He was burning the wolf from the inside without shooting it out.

There was no need to shoot it out.

Rundelhous' magic was directly affecting the wolf from its mouth.

The dire wolf could not withstand the pain and struggled to break away from Rundelhous, but he grabbed on as if he was possessed, refusing to let go of the dire wolf no matter what.

No, the saw-like teeth on either side of its mouth dug into the fabric of Rundelhous' clothes and the gauntlets on his hands, it would be hard for him to withdraw his hands even if he wanted to.

"Don't underestimate me, I am..."

The road in the evening sky was filled with the sound of Rundelhous' hoarse scream.

"I am Rundelhous Code! I am an Adventurer!"

Part 9

The air was filled with a charred burning smell.

As Rundelhous had planned, 'Magician Gauntlets' went out of control and burned the dire wolf from the inside and the right half of the hobgoblin along with it.

Isuzu's party gained the victory in this battle.

And the most valuable player of this victory, Rundelhous who should be laughing arrogantly, was lying in the mud in front of Isuzu.

"Nature Revive!"

Serara's resurrection spell did not have any effect.

This was as expected. The one lying on the ground with his pale face full of mud, his prince-like face looking smooth despite being dirty, just like a nobleman in his dreams...

He was a Person of the Land.

"...I am sorry."

Warm water dripped on Isuzu's palm.

"Why didn't he revive? Hey Minori, one more time!"

The confused Tohya shouted, Minori nodded and cast 'Prayer for the Soul', but Rundelhous did not wake up.

This was as expected.

"I am sorry... Tohya, Rudy is...a People... of the Land..."

Isuzu said slowly.

The words were stuck in his throat and wouldn't come out, and he relaxed his fist as if he accepted this. Minori in the corner of her eyes clenched her

fists, Serara saying softly "How could it be...". But Isuzu thought all this didn't matter.

"...Rudy is a People of the Land... He partied with us, adventured with us, ate with us... But Rudy is a People of the Land... So... If he dies..."

...He wouldn't revive.

Isuzu's heart hurt so much it almost shattered.

She already thought about this.

That's why Isuzu objected to battles, but since she couldn't win against the majority, she decided to support Rundelhous, and stop him from overexerting himself.

But she couldn't stop him.

(If only I had stopped him at the very beginning.)

When she noticed this during their time in Ragranda forest, she should have turned him down. No, she just needed to expose him to everyone, it wouldn't have ended like this.

To fulfill Rundelhous' dream, Isuzu lied along with him.

Because Rundelhous said he wanted to be an Adventurer with such a pure and sincere expression.

But they were fundamentally different.

It was impossible for him to become an Adventurer.

That's right, Rundelhous was sad and troubled before, complaining why he couldn't accumulate EXP no matter how much he fought. His growth speed was less than a quarter of Isuzu and the others'. He was troubled by his slow leveling speed, that's why he was so anxious about training.

Isuzu had never seen Rundelhous relax casually in the tent, he would meditate strictly whenever he had time. He claimed this was expected of a nobleman and was a measure of a true man's worth, but he must be filled with worries and frustrations.

Isuzu knew about this, but she still let him go on.

"Rudy...I am sorry, I am sorry..."

Rundelhous' wish was too naive, too pure, so Isuzu dreamed together with him, hoping a People of the Land could become an Adventurer.

"Rudy-nii is... a People of the Land...?"

Isuzu nodded, the tears flowing down her cheeks dripped as she nodded. But this didn't matter, this was Isuzu's punishment.

Rundelhous was so gentle.

She was just a skinny brat from the country side, but Rundelhous treated her like a lady.

She was very conscious of her freckles and didn't look pretty at all, but Rundelhous kept addressing her as 'Miss'.

She was always dragging the group behind, she did not stop him properly in the end, and she treated him willfully like an idiot or a puppy.

(I am so happy he talked to me.)

(I am so happy he complimented me.)

(I am so happy he treated me like a lady.)

The words surged out like crazy, but they were stuck in her throat and couldn't come out, she could only moan and push her tears out of her eyes.

Gentle, kind, and heart-warming memories, it was all her fault she pressured Rundelhous to his death.

"Ah..."

Serara made a small sound, cast 'Instant Heal' and put her ears on Rundelhous' chest. She cast it again with a grim expression.

"Hmm, could it be..."

Isuzu searched for this impossible hope and came to Serara's side.

"I don't know why, his pulse is almost stopping, but when I cast healing spells, there seems to be some sort of effect... but I am sorry, resurrection spell is still ineffective."

Isuzu felt the hope she picked up shatter again, but the young girl continued staunchly.

"We can't give up yet."

"Ah?"

"...Please help us, we need your strength Shiroe-san!"

CHAPTER.

CONTRACT

[契約]

▶ NAME: TAKAYAMA MISA

▶ LEVEL: 90

▶ RACE: WOLF FANG TRIBE

▶ CLASS: BARD

▶ HP: 8040

▶ MP: 12237

▶ ITEM 1:

[CALAMITY HEARTS]

BOO OF DEATH'S SCYTHE, WHICH WAS SAID TO CAUSE CALAMITIES WITH A SINGLE SWING. A CRUEL WEAPON WHICH GRANTS HIGH CRITICAL RATE WITH MULTIPLE HITS. A RARE ITEM WITH HIGH POPULARITY DUE TO NOT ONLY ITS PERFORMANCE, BUT ALSO DUE TO IT'S ILL-OMENED, DIVINE DESIGN.



▶ ITEM 2:

[RED DRAGON HORN BATON]

BATON MADE OF A RED DRAGON'S HORN. A HIGH GRADE PRODUCTION-CLASS ITEM FOR BARDS. INCREASES THE EFFECT OF SUPPORT SONGS USED BY PAID MEMBERS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO USE IN STANDARD PARTIES, BUT IT SHINES IN LARGE-SCALE COMBAT.



▶ ITEM 3:

[KNITTED SILVER THREAD GAMBESON]

PRODUCTION-CLASS ARMOR REQUIRING AN ARTISAN TO CREATE "SILK THREAD OF COCOON BUTTERFLIES", A BLACKSMITH TO CREATE "FINE SILVER THREAD" AND A TAILOR TO PUT IT TOGETHER. ALTHOUGH IT IS AN ITEM REQUIRING A COMPLICATED CRAFTING PROCESS AND RARE MATERIALS, BECAUSE OF THAT IT IS LIGHT AND DURABLE, AND IS AN ARTICLE OF RARE BEAUTY WITH HIGH MAGIC RESIST.



	Name: Takayama Misa
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Level: 90

Race: Wolf Fang Tribe

Class: Bard

HP: 8040

MP: 12237

Calamity Hearts
God of Death's scythe, which was said to cause calamities with a single swing. A cruel weapon which grants high critical rate with multiple hits. A rare item with high popularity due to not only its performance, but also due to its ill-omened, divine design.

Red Dragon Horn Baton
Baton made of a Red Dragon's horn. A high-grade Production-class item for Bards. Increases the effect of support songs used by raid members. It is difficult to use in standard parties, but it shines in large-scale combat.

Knitted Silver Thread Gambeson
Production-class armor requiring an Artisan to create "Silk Thread of Cocoon Butterflies", a Blacksmith to create "Fine Silver Thread" and a Tailor to put it together. Although it is an item requiring a complicating crafting process and rare materials, because of that it is light and durable, and is an article of rare beauty with high magic resist.

Chapter 5 Contract

Part 1

"...Please help us, we need your strength Shiroe-san!"

Suppressing the pain in her heart, the clear sorrow in her voice told Shiroe something was amiss.

Minori was not a girl who would joke in this kind of voice.

She was a serious, gentle, and strong girl.

Shiroe noticed that Minori saw him as her role model.

Minori tried to learn everything he did on the battlefield and unconsciously remembered everything even mimicking the way he walked. Because she was such a girl, Shiroe wanted to teach her all that he knew.

Minori always responded to his lessons with more than 100% effort.

Shiroe didn't know what sort of life she lived in the old world and he never asked. Shiroe could not hope to understand the feelings of a pair of middle-school siblings who were trapped away from home and could only hang on to each other.

But her willingness to take up responsibility did not diminish in this alternate world.

This was a virtue Shiroe didn't have, he knew he had been running away, refusing to build his own abode.

A girl who was not afraid of socializing with others and committed wholeheartedly.

Minori seemed to admire Shiroe, but Shiroe thought that he had been saved by her practical character.

Minori had never asked so desperately for help before. She trusted him, she was on intimate terms with him, she asked him for tutelage, but she had never asked for his help so defenselessly before.

It should be the pride in her heart holding her back. Shiroe liked this part of her as well and held her in high regards.

But Minori who was like this was fighting back tears as she talked. She was not asking just anyone, but Shiroe himself, which surprised him.

From the entrance of the tent he could see the sky was turning purple in the evening.

"Someone fell, Rundelhous-san, he..."

From the background of Minori he could hear shouts and sounds of gasping breaths.

Telepathy seemed to work like low-performance cell phones.

The sound emitted near the ear drum, so others would not overhear your message, but you needed to talk out loud to relay your message and the background noise would be picked up too.

Minori should be still near the battlefield, he could hear the sounds of other girls and the noisy background.

"He is..."

"Rudy is... a People of the Land."

Another voice interrupted.

Shiroe deduced the voice belonged to the bard Isuzu that Minori mentioned. To be able to hear the words so clearly meant she was almost touching Minori's lips.

Shiroe understood everything from this.

He stood up almost knocking the table away, grabbed his backpack, and rushed out of the tent. After blowing his whistle twice, he didn't waste time for the griffon to come and ran to the central plaza of the equestrian garden.

"Minori, status report."

After taking 3 steps into the plaza, he found a communication operator nearby and told him to get Charasin over now.

"A fierce battle broke out while defending Choshi, we won but Rundelhous-san was mortally wounded in the process. Resurrection magic

failed, but he still has a pulse and body warmth... But remains unconscious."

...Resurrection magic failed.

The giant wings that spread across the skies landed, Shiroe jumped on subconsciously and almost didn't notice Akatsuki following behind and squeezing into his arms. He then gave a signal to the magical beast.

The well-trained flying mount flew off on cue into the sky that was turning dark.

"The pulse... should be gradually weakening."

"Use a resurrection spell again."

"We've already cast it twice, but he didn't regain consciousness..."

Resurrection magic could revive companions who died.

The magic seemed miraculous in nature, but was not difficult. Healer classes could learn it by level 20. Resurrection spells also had levels, low-level spells could revive players but at the expense of the target losing some EXP.

This was the reason why Minori contacted Shiroe after trying it twice.

(No, there should be a more important reason...)

The People of the Land were not Adventurers, they could not revive once they die, and they would not respawn at the cathedral. The background at the other end of the telepathy line was the sound of sobbing with suppressed emotion and mourning.

"Your whereabouts and party members."

"Me, Tohya, Isuzu-san, Serara-san and Rundelhous-san who has not been revived, location is the main junction in the central district of Choshi."

"Is it safe?"

"No enemies around, but they are probably still fighting at the coastal area, I don't know when the goblins will strike again."

...It was ending.

When the People of the Land took too much damage in battle and were losing their lives, the term for this was ending. According to Ri Gan's spirit theory, resurrection spells might work in the short moment before the soul separated from the body. Since the resurrection failed, it meant he had moved into the stage of 'Failing Essence'.

"Shiroe-nii, please save Rudy!"

He could hear a strong voice in his ears.

"Rudy-nii is stupid and a fool, but he is also strong and cool, he sacrificed himself to save me!"

"I am the one who brought him to the battlefield, no, I did not do that directly but I didn't stop Rudy from coming, Shiroe-san... I am willing to do anything!"

This sobbing voice came from the other end of the telepathy.

'...I need.'

He heard Minori's words.

These words made Shiroe cool down.

He visualized an asphalt road that was going to be covered by snow in the winter night, and he was lying on this road and losing his temperature. It was foreboding but clear, a way for Shiroe to release his imagination.

His unrestricted thoughts went out of control, searching for a route through the matrix of possibilities he could imagine, going through the feasibility of all possible combinations.

(Since this is Minori's request, I have to help her.)

This was not his will, but his prerequisite.

To fulfill the prerequisite, Shiroe increased his speed of thinking.

"Instruct Serara to use resurrection magic."

"Yes."

Minori replied immediately.

She didn't question why and didn't object that it would not work. Minori trusted Shiroe totally, she believed that Shiroe must have a way, that's why she contacted him.

But that was just her one-sided wishful thinking.

There were things Shiroe could not do. Wrong, Shiroe could not do most things, in this strange and unreasonable alternate world, he could even say that he couldn't do anything at all.

But this was just a small issue, could not be done meant could not be done, he would think about it when he needed to tackle it. The important thing was that Minori believed Shiroe could do it, so there was only one answer for Shiroe.

He believed he could do it.

The heart that believed reconstructed all kinds of combinations in his mind, seeing things from other angles and reviewing the concepts that were thought to be impossible.

"The pulse seems to be strengthened... But he is still unconscious."

"Wait 150 seconds, Tohya guard the area, Isuzu-san use MP recovery songs, 150 seconds later Minori use resurrection magic."

"Yes."

Shiroe recollected Ri Gan's words.

Rundelhous was dead.

For People of the Land or Adventurers, dead meant dead.

Death started when the body stopped moving in this alternate world. The body would not be able to move, the consciousness was disconnected from the body and trapped in darkness.

This was a sign the communication between the 'Soul' and 'Essence' had ceased.

The 'Essence' would then start to dissipate.

'Essence' was the source of energy for the 'Ki' in the body, the diffusion process was known as 'Failing Essence'. For powerful or high-level bodies, they had stronger 'Ki' and the 'Failing Essence' process lasted longer.

Rundelhous was a physically weak mage class, and he was at the beginner-level, the speed of his 'Failing Essence' should be very fast.

Probably... the resurrection magic probably came too late.

A resurrection spell cast by the healer would inject 'Essence' into the body in the state of 'Failing Essence' in order to magically repair the connection between the 'Soul' and the 'Essence'.

It gathered the dissipated 'Essence' and used the healer's 'Ki' to replenish any lost 'Ki' of the target, stimulating the body to recover.

Since there was still body warmth and pulse, it could be deduced that the spell had stimulated recovery, but the connection between 'Soul' and 'Essence' was not repaired, so he did not regain consciousness.

If that was the situation, it made sense.

The 'Soul' was starting to diffuse... reaching a state of 'Losing Soul'. 'Soul' was the energy that drove the psyche, the human psyche was based on 'Soul', as its connection to the body was severed, it would become a lost 'Soul' and lose its identity.

The low-level Rundelhous must have gone into the state of 'Losing Soul' right after he reached the stage of 'Failing Essence'.

Adventurers could be sent to the cathedral to respawn where a new body was made, the 'Soul' was then linked to this new body. As their body could respawn, they would not go through the state of 'Losing Soul', so even if their body died, their 'Soul' would respawn in a new body... They would not die for real.

"It has been 150 seconds, casting resurrection now."

"After another 150 seconds, Serara will cast resurrection again, I am on my way there so take turns casting magic for 8 minutes."

He heard Minori's acknowledgement. The resurrection spells around level 20 were still primitive, it had a long casting time and they would be defenseless, not practical for use on the battlefield and had a cool down of 300 seconds.

But Rundelhou had both Serara and Minori by his side, they might be new but they were still healers.

By taking turns to cast resurrection spell, they could halve the 300 seconds cool down to 150 seconds. Resurrection magic needed a lot of MP, Shiroe didn't know how long they could last, but he could only leave it to them.

'Losing Soul' was triggered by 'Failing Essence', when the host body disappeared, the 'Soul' would also be lost. How much they could stop the 'Losing Soul' process was dependent on their resurrection spells.

The next would be...

"Akatsuki, hold me."

This made the silent Akatsuki turn around slowly despite the terrifying conditions on the back of the flying griffon. In the strong wind that threatened to tear through her skin, she hugged Shiroe tightly.

Shiroe closed his eyes and thought of what items he had in his Bag and reached in. He didn't know what items he needed to use, or even if it would work.

But to prepare for the 'spell' he would be casting, he searched for the suitable items.

The bottle of ink Shiroe took a long time to formulate. The only bottle of soul fragments in the whole world.

Part 2

Raynesia arrived on the battlefield accompanied by the female knight in the evening.

According to reports, the vicinity of the valley had been secured by Krusty's forces.

"Woo..."

"Are you okay?"

The female knight did not show much concern in her expressions, but she still asked kindly.

There were very few people who experienced the air of the battlefield in this world. Because the People of the Land and demihumans died very fast, their bodies would disappear within half a day. No matter what kind of battle it was, the place would just be a deserted land when the bodies were gone.

But this battlefield was formed very recently.

The stench of blood was too stimulating for Raynesia, fortunately the summer breeze could be felt through the greenery making the smell more bearable, but she was unable to look down around her feet.

The female knight took a step forward to confirm the details of the battle.

The female knight who introduced herself as Takayama Misa belongs to the 'Field Monitor' group.

In the heat of battle, especially on a large-scale like this, your field of vision would be obscured and limited, it would be hard to grasp the whole situation from the front-lines.

So D.D.D would detail a group with the size between a party and a 'Full Raid' to survey the battlefield and support the 'Legion Raid' group fighting on the ground. Their main duty was to use optical items and reconnaissance spells to gather intelligence and report to the front-line commander.

Raynesia thought Takayama Misa was a high ranking officer within D.D.D because of the attitudes of the people around her.

Because they scouted a trail without the need to bash through the vegetation, they reached the bottom of the valley earlier than expected. Raynesia along with her escorts came to the wide rocky river bank near the stream.

This was upstream of the battlefield they could see from the platform above, there were no signs of any goblin corpses, only the cool flow of the stream warding off the summer heat.

The Adventurers around were resting in their preferred way, some of them were showering topless, others were doing weapon maintenance.

This was the center of the battlefield, but with no enemy formation around, so everyone was resting except the sentries working on shift.

Raynesia had reviewed the parade procession of knights as a princess before.

But she did so from a balcony and gave a prepared speech. She would occasionally head into the parade square and greet the knights as she walked past their formation, but the knights of Maihama would always be in perfect alignment and holding their spears at the perfect angle for her review.

So she had never been up close and personal, walking among knights who were considered rowdy by nobles' standards.

Raynesia was a People of the Land, the daughter of the family ruling Maihama. Even if Akiba joined the 'League of Freedom Towns', as long as they didn't have a direct lord-subordinate relationship, the knights had no obligation to respect Raynesia. Raynesia didn't wish to upset them too much since she was gradually accepting the Adventurers had a different culture from her.

Raynesia already knew they did not like to stand on ceremony, so she was not offended although she was a bit surprised.

What astonished her more was that the group did not ignore her.

Whenever Raynesia passed by them, the Adventurers would greet her with a loud voice.

"Don't worry princess, we will settle this war in no time."

"Heavens, Caucasian-types look like angels."

"The blitz group will be enough to take out all the goblins."

"A real princess is here, where is the camera!"

"Is it okay to wander here princess? Ah, so Miss Takayama is here, god bless."

"Ha ha ha! Our commander is just ahead princess."

"Wah, wah!"

"Be careful of stray arrows!"

They were crude in their words, giving Raynesia the impression of the rumored mercenaries, but she did not feel any distaste about them. Maybe she knew the Adventurers were not being rude and looking down on her when they said these words, that was the usual way they acted, and they were friendly enough to joke with her.

Raynesia was a shut-in.

She did not converse well with others.

She had been relying on her perfect lady education to handle all the situations she faced, but she realized this was not effective on the Adventurers.

The Adventurers were not familiar with the culture of the nobles, they wouldn't misinterpret her slight change in expression and overreact.

After Raynesia's rare session of thinking, she invented an original method to interact with the Adventurers with simple etiquette to avoid shaming her Corwen heritage.

The method was to smile and wave her hand at chest level.

If someone gave her advice or spoke with her, she would think about the meaning for a while and reply "Thank you". Adventurers were the same breed as the mind-reading monster, she would be seen through if she only worked on her appearance. Even if she showed her side unbecoming of a lady, they were not nobles and wouldn't mind... This was the conclusion made by Raynesia.

According to the strict standards of the social world, Raynesia's attitude was on the borderline of being rude. But they were Adventurers and this was the battlefield, Raynesia explained to her grandfather in her heart.

But Raynesia did not realize her sincere smile and cute actions after gingerly crossing the line of etiquette in her heart had made a good impression on the Adventurers in the blitz group who welcomed her readily.

The hybrid task force was led by Krusty, he based the structure of the group around D.D.D members to ensure the integrity of the command structure. But if he only used D.D.D members, Krusty would be showing too much strength in the Round Table Council, so he had to show the unity of the Round Table Council when he arranged the raid group. So half of this hybrid army was formed by veteran players not affiliated with D.D.D.

They included guild members from Black Sword Knights and Honesty, there was a variety in cape colors and coat of arms, which Raynesia interpreted as aristocratic clans, so this band of knights looked strange to her.

The relationships among the nobles' clans were complicated, with blood relationship and alliances making it more sophisticated. It may not be the same for all the nobles, but there were generally some hostilities between the clans. This was the reason why the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' was not united.

But such conflicts were not apparent in this battlefield.

From the colors of their capes and their coat of arms, they seemed to have divided themselves into smaller parties. But some of them were eating, some were helping with weapon inspections, others were running around distributing resupplies.

Raynesia noticed the source of her discomfort.

With so many knights around, there were no squires or attendants around. Takayama Misa explained that they were a select group of elite forces so weaklings would only get in the way, but how could there be so many knights without any squires?

(The Adventurers seem to be free from class systems...)

Even though she knew they were very free, but to see it in action with her eyes, every little detail surprised her.

"Yes, I can hear you, please continue."

Krusty was at the front edge of the bank where the stream bent and formed a pool, wiping his sweat off his topless body.

He was communicating with long range magic even when he was wiping his sweat, but he turned to face them when he saw Takayama Misa and Raynesia's group.

Krusty calmly wiped his body with a cloth he wrung dry. Takayama Misa seemed used to his bold and calm actions, as she approached him to report with documents in hand.

Krusty listened attentively with his back to her.

(What an amazing body...)

Krusty with his elegant clothes in the courts didn't give such a feeling of impact. She could feel his overwhelming strength just looking at his bare back. His muscular back had the beauty of a wild beast as Raynesia lost herself looking at it.

(...Eh! What am I looking at!)

Raynesia shook her head and sulked.

She always lost her pace when Krusty was around.

She missed the peaceful bedroom in Maihama. She really liked living as a shut-in, she just wanted to sleep after eating and live lazily like plants. Her biggest hobby was sun-bathing, she was looking forward to becoming an old lady and enjoying her life like a hermit.

According to Raynesia's ideals, it was not wrong to say she had changed or become depraved.

"Understood, I will increase the amount of survey groups at the next location."

When Takayama Misa finished her report, Krusty had already dressed himself. He was wearing the same armor but he seemed to have changed his shirt. His calm expression was the same as his time in the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice', he was so calm that it made Raynesia mad.

"How was the battlefield?"

Krusty asked as he walked towards her.

Because of their height difference, Raynesia had to tilt her head up, which made her feel unpleasant. She could neither feel the joy Krusty had when he fought nor the feeling that he might disappear like a flimsy illusion.

The mind-reading monster was standing prim and proper in front of her, that feeling she had seemed to be like a dream.

"Did you feel scared?"

Raynesia was trapped in her own thoughts and slow in responding, so Krusty asked her again teasingly.

"No such thing, I believe Krusty-sama will protect me."

Since Krusty put on his mask of courtly manners, she had to reply in kind. She wanted to show him she had much more experience in the rhetoric and culture of the aristocrats.

"... The princess sure is popular."

Raynesia turned around and saw a group of Adventurers observing Krusty and Raynesia from afar without moving. This made Raynesia feel uneasy, so she waved her hands gently and smiled, and the Adventurers went about their business with smiles on their faces.

"Such a thing does not matter Krusty-sama."

Raynesia faced Krusty again bearing the frustration of going off-topic. Krusty was always showing this type of attitude, making Raynesia unsure of whether to put on her courtly manners or to adjust to the Adventurer's way.

"Also..."

Just as Raynesia stepped forward to speak, the howl of wolves echoed through the entire valley. It came from the eastern ridge, it was obviously from a distance away, but it still drove a chill into Raynesia's heart.

"That was..."

"Dire wolves, should be large in size judging by the sound."

"From the goblin king's escort?"

"The goblin king is not here, he will not leave 'Seven Falls', this is the goblin general's royal guards."

"Royal guards..."

Raynesia clasped her hands in front of her chest, she saw the rampage of Krusty's army and believed in their strength. But Raynesia did not know anything about battles so she was afraid, and Krusty seemed so dangerous when he threw himself into battle.

She was not sure if she should ask him to take care of himself or motivate him for the upcoming fight.

As Raynesia hesitated, the wolves howled again. Krusty grinned at the sound and did not notice how Raynesia felt and he said with a cruel smile:

"We will wipe out their nest later, let's take out the trash in Sand Leaf for now."

Part 3

The long central road in Choshi was an excellent landing runway for the griffon. The magic beast did not flap its wings as it glided down. Shiroe patted Akatsuki's head, looked down and whispered: "Please clear the area, don't let any players or monsters come near."

Akatsuki nodded without saying anything.

Even though the speed was faster than a horse, the 2 of them jumped off the griffon without any concern and moved off separately. Akatsuki moved weightlessly forward, her light body disappeared behind the roof of the stone building.

After seeing her off, Shiroe rushed towards Tohya who was waving his hand.

There were 5 people in Minori's group, all of them had anxious faces. From the reports he received through telepathy, the Ocypete had arrived but was unable to dock because of the Sahuagin's resistance. Naotsugu's party was dealing with the goblins in place of Minori's group.

(That will be more convenient.)

Shiroe did not know if the spell would work. Even though the theory was sound and Shiroe had experimented repeatedly, it was still a gamble. Considering the impact on the future, it would be better to have fewer witnesses even if it succeeded.

Was that a tavern or hotel in front?

A young man lay motionless under the roof of an open concept building, the crying girl beside him should be Isuzu, a charming young girl with freckles.

Familiar faces surrounded Shiroe, Tohya with his painful expression, Serara with her look of worry, and Minori with her sense of purpose.

Shiroe calmed his heart.

It was hot out here, but his mind was like the winter night sky.

"Minori, add me to your party."

"Yes."

Minori nodded without further questions. Shiroe was thankful that she was not talking in this situation. He observed Rundelhaus' face, he looked like an elegant nobleman. He still had body warmth and a pulse, but he was still unconscious. The party status screen was flashing the word 'death'.

"I recall you are Isuzu-san? Continue 'Mediation Nocturne', I am going to cast a new spell, please keep this an absolute secret."

Shiroe told the beginners with a strict tone.

"If you cannot agree then give up or leave."

The group shook their heads in response, no one flinched away at his words.

"Alright, let's begin."

Shiroe chose the spell from the menu and cast 'Mana Channeling', a unique spell of enchanter which had unknown functions.

The effect was to drain all the MP of his allies and distribute it equally.

(Correct... The psyche lies in the 'Soul', and MP is the manifestation of the 'Soul', if that is the case...)

As he chanted the spell incantation, the MP of the whole party gathered inside Shiroe.

Shiroe out-leveled all of them, the draining part of his 'Mana Channeling' was a heavy burden on Minori's party who were less than level 30.

Minori, Tohya, and Serara looked pale. Their MP was gradually drained away, making them feel dizzy and lost. Isuzu continued to hold Rundelhous' hand and sing her sad ancient ballad despite her face turning white.

Shiroe felt the effect of the magic with his eyes half-closed.

The MP he gathered from his allies was all under Shiroe's control. He could feel the lingering scent of their 'Soul' although it was only a faint hint. Tohya's one-track mind, Minori's seriousness, all of these expanded out under Shiroe's control.

It also included Serara's, Isuzu's, Rundelhous', and his own MP.

The MP with different subtle tastes mixed into primitive spiritual energy and was guided along the magical circuit connected to his allies.

Shiroe divided the MP evenly and distributed it.

(Hnng!)

The rapid loss of MP gave Shiroe a feeling of anemia.

His MP was more than the other members', enchanter's belonged to the mage class and their maximum MP was among the highest among the classes. And Shiroe was level 90, re-allocating the MP evenly with level 30 adventurers was the same as refilling all their MP in one shot.

"Minori cast Resurrection, Serara continue to heal."

This was all preparation work, Shiroe continued to give instructions, but the time was short, there might only be one chance and one sentence.

Rundelhous was a People of the Land.

He was not an Adventurer, so he would not revive after dying.

And Rundelhous was now dead.

That's why Rundelhous would not revive.

This was an iron-clad rule that could not be overturned.

The mana-channeling spell of the enchanter restored the MP of the group... in other words, revitalized their psyche and soul.

He did not regain consciousness because his 'Soul' and 'Essence' were not connected. This was the same as being comatose, so they needed to find a way to force it to connect.

For the next phase, Shiroe took something out from his backpack.

"It will be a race against time."

Shiroe used 'Hades Incense of Soul Recovery' as he finished his sentence.

This was used to wake your allies or creatures for a short time, a medicine mainly used for special monsters. The effect was not resurrection, just regaining of consciousness for 3 minutes before you died again, and the Adventurer would be forcibly sent back to the cathedral.

But for Rundelhous whose 'Essence' was dissipating continuously, this item held a certain possibility.

No matter what happened, his body would be destroyed, the psyche and soul residing in the host body would also perish.

'Hades Incense of Soul Recovery' would re-energize his 'Soul' and forcibly connect it to his body, but at the expense of death after 3 minutes. He could only pull Rundelhous back to this world for 3 minutes.

A fake resurrection with a time limit.

The group seemed to understand this as Isuzu tightened her grip on Rundelhous' hand with tears flowing down her cheeks.

"Ah..."

Rundelhous opened his eyes slowly as if he just woke up from a dream.

Isuzu couldn't stop crying as she held his hands. It was unclear if he had regained consciousness, even his eyes opening might be just the reflex of his body.

"Rudy...?"

"Miss Isuzu...ah, everyone, that's right... seems like... I died."

He had some awareness after death, just that the connection between his 'Soul' and 'Essence' had been severed. For Adventurers, this meant the monitor lost its color, you could only watch your comrades fighting in black and white. It was not clear how it was for the People of the Land, but Rundelhous seemed able to grasp the situation.

Rundelhous smiled and spoke with a tired voice to the others.

"Don't be like this everybody... don't make such a face. If you fight you will risk death, isn't that natural?"

"Only... natural..."

Tohya's voice made Shiroe's heart ache.

It was something they didn't joke about in the game, the heavy topic of death... was only natural for the People of the Land.

"I wanted to be an Adventurer despite that, please don't blame Miss Isuzu okay? I wanted her to help me keep this a secret."

"No, I already noticed, but I chose to ignore it!"

Minori cried out loud, telling everyone the impact this had on the Minori who always acted calmly.

"Ha ha ha, yeah, thank you Miss Minori... there is no need to feel bothered about this."

"No, there is a need."

Shiroe interrupted.

There was no time.

Shiroe let his mind run free as he thought about the horrifying thing he was about to do. It might be a big mistake, it might even threaten the laws of the world.

He didn't know how this would affect the world if he was successful, or how the world would receive this 'proposal'.

But the young man who had accepted his fate and was bidding farewell to the rest called himself an Adventurer.

This was not the term to describe players, but the term for traveling the world and seeing a sunrise that no one had seen before, the name of Shiroe's companions.

Since he called himself that, he was also a scion of 'hers'.

"No, you need to feel bothered. Rundelhous Code, a fellow who gives up so easily calling himself an Adventurer will only trouble others. This is not enough... Did you spend your whole life training and learning in order to die in an alley like this? What you have found in the dungeons are not tactics or strategy, but the will to survive, the grit to do anything to keep living on no matter how hard you have to work, the spirit to never give up right?"

"Shiroe-nii..."

"Rundelhous, your resolve is not strong enough!"

"Then what do you expect me to do?"

Rundelhous' eyes were full of regret and dismay, even if he said this was only natural, his heart refused to accept it as his tears started to flow.

Because of this, Shiroe decided to use that 'magic'.

"Pay attention and listen up!"

Shiroe took out the document he scribbled while he was on the griffon's back and put it in front of Rundelhous' face.

"This is..."

"A contract?"

The document Shiroe took from his backpack was indeed a contract, it was written in 'Carved Dragon Eye Ink' on the 'Fairy King Paper' made from top-class ingredients, the only one in the world.

"Contract... Log Horizon representative Shiroe, and Rundelhou Code agree to the following terms:

1. Effective immediately, Shiroe invites Rundelhou to join the guild Log Horizon.
 2. Rundelhou will act appropriately and carry out tasks assigned seriously befitting his position as a member of Log Horizon.
 3. Log Horizon will provide Rundelhou with necessary support to aid him in carrying out his tasks... including the identity of an Adventurer.
 4. This contract is based on mutual agreement of both parties, whatever things either party gain will remain in effect even if the contract lapses.
- As above, there are 2 copies of the contract, both parties will keep one copy after signing the agreement as proof."

Sounds of gasping could be heard.

"Adventurer...?"

"This is... Shiroe-san, this is...!"

This was developing a spell that was not in the game.

Shiroe noticed this possibility a long time ago.

Chefs could cook food manually without using the game menu, making dishes with normal taste.

Nyanta explained to Shiroe on their way back to Susukino.

And this had proven to be correct.

And Shiroe convinced the Round Table Council that this was not limited to chefs.

People with the corresponding skills could use them to create items without using the game menu, making things that did not exist in this alternate world.

This was the real meaning behind Nyanta's discovery.

2 months after that, Shiroe had been researching things he had visualized and conducted experiments repeatedly. He kept this as a hidden ace to be used if the Round Table Council meeting did not go smoothly, but further research and data kept accumulating and it evolved.

His conversation with Ri Gan about Spirit Theory gave Shiroe an inspiration and one of his research topics was going to bear fruit here.

Rundelhous was a People of the Land.

And he would die in 3 minutes.

People of the Land could not revive.

Rundelhous would disappear.

If that was the case, the answer was obvious...

He needed to make Rundelhous into an Adventurer in these 3 minutes.

His experiments proved that scribes could make simple contracts and all sort of documents such as 'Mission Request Forms' or 'IOU' that had magical binding powers. A scribe with a high enough level could create these with magical ingredients.

But among these type of contracts, this one was top class.

Allowing a Person of the Land to join a guild and bestowing the identity of Adventurer on him, this contract looked like a fraud to Shiroe. So Shiroe used his level 90 Scribe skills and the top-class magical ingredients and ink he collected during the time when Elder Tales was a game without regret in order to fulfill this request.

Shiroe moved the contract closer to Rundelhous' face.

"I have already signed this, the rest is up to you."

"...Ven...turer..."

"You can realize your dreams."

The young sorcerer with mud all over him said in a weak voice, as Shiroe explained to him.

"This contract has a risk, you will be altered in some ways after the contract takes effect, becoming a different being. Adventurers are still new to this world, you might get caught in some other events, Adventurers might not be as glorious as you imagined."

"I want to become..."

The status screen still showed the flashing word 'death', his HP was reducing gradually, Rundelhous replied without hesitation.

"I want to become an Adventurer, people who help those in need, I won't mind the small details... I am not after the glory... I just want to be... an Adventurer."

Rundelhous grabbed the pen with his trembling hand and it fell out of his hand immediately. 'Hades Incense of Soul Recovery' was losing its effect, Rundelhous might be unable to keep his 'Soul' and 'Essence' connected.

"Rudy... don't worry."



Isuzu held his hand.

"I will sign this together with Rudy."

Isuzu embraced Rundelhous from behind, Tohya helped from the side, Minori and Serara cast healing spells repeatedly, the four of them watched over Rudy as he signed.

His trembling hands gained warmth with his comrades' encouragement, Rundelhous used the magical ink to write down his name, the signature burned with a golden light. Shiroe's skills were acknowledged by this alternate world, becoming a brand new law.

"Rundelhous, you will die... and respawn in the cathedral."

Shiroe said as he felt the cogs turning somewhere by this spell. The dissipating 'Essence' turned into dancing light particles and flew towards Akiba, the other players watched this dream-like scene with stunned expressions.

The act of developing magic was the reason why he earned the nickname 'Chronicler of the East' in the future.

Part 4

The battle continued in the dark.

In the heart of the Sand Leaf central hills.

The venue was a valley like the previous battle, the only difference was the size of the place and the scale of the battle. When she asked Takayama Misa why they chose to fight in valleys, the answer was: "A large group needs a lot of space to gather, we can organize ourselves in the forest or the hills, but it will be hard to accommodate everyone there."

Raynesia thought about it and agreed.

Goblins might be demihumans, but their intelligence was low. But since they were moving in an army, they would follow certain rules.

Since they were fighting in the valley, there were several ridges where they could see the whole valley.

Takayama Misa's observation team was based on one of these ridges but it was different from last time. They only set up the minimum observation tables. It may be that they might need to move on short notice, or because Raynesia declined the chair, but from the looks of relief from Takayama Misa, Raynesia predicted the previous time was a special arrangement just for her. [1]

But these were trivial matters.

Raynesia, Takayama Misa, and the others were already concentrating on the battle in the valley.

Takayama Misa explained that the team leading the dire wolves were goblin tamers. The barbaric goblins didn't have a complicated society like humans, but they had primitive division of labor and classes.

Most goblins were lightly armored warriors or spearmen, but some of the goblins had special classes, the most common one being goblin tamer and goblin shaman. The goblin tamers bred beasts like Owlbears, Hippogriffs, and dire wolves.

They could see the enemy formation had hundreds of dire wolves, as if the dark ground had gained sentience and squirmed, a scene from nightmares.

"Seems like a mutant breed."

Takayama Misa explained calmly:

"We fought them in a raid before, it is a wolf with poisonous fangs raised in the miasma of the undead. To have raised so many means the goblin king has a tribe of goblin tamers... Elder Tales has such an intriguing detailed secret setting."

"Would... Would they be alright..."

"Worrying is an absurd action."

Takayama Misa maintained her cold attitude and words, but Raynesia was not so optimistic. There were a few hundred enemies spread out across the valley, the goblin general must be in the center, probably in the exotic tent with wheels that was essentially a mobile fortress.

Raynesia was not worried about that monster knight, but his subordinates were knights as well. Even though they wouldn't die, it would still be painful if they got hurt, which pained her too.

But the two sides engaged suddenly without regard to Raynesia's worries.

"Square shape... so pretty."

"This is the square formation."

Takayama Misa walked to Raynesia's side probably to chat.

She pointed to Krusty's army that was aligned on 4 sides in the shape of a square and continued.

"This is a common formation used in raids, the groups are usually formed in multiples of 4, the same number of sides as the box. So in terms of command, squares are the easiest formation to adopt. It is basically a defensive formation, with the tanks and melee fighters in the front supported by the ranged and magic attacks as the main source of damage dealers. But since this is a tight-knit formation, it will be bad against enemies with powerful wide-area attacks. But against groups of wild beasts, it can be an iron-clad defensive wall."

"So that is how..."

Raynesia guessed right.

The strong vanguards deflected the attacks of the wolves easily, with arrows and magic flying out from behind them. The balm ensured Raynesia had a clear vision in the dark, but great columns of fire all over the valley made it so bright that she could see without any assistance.

"They are moving."

Takayama Misa pointed straight at the battlefield.

The whole formation seemed to move with her finger. It turned into the shape of a trapezoid and advanced, taking out the enemies in its way.

Takayama Misa said this was a defensive formation, but this seemed to be an unreliable evaluation.

This was the first time Raynesia viewed a large-scale battle, she had never seen the defensive battles of the castle knights, so she had nothing to use as a reference, but what she saw could not be described as defensive.

She saw it as a square hole.

Krusty's army seemed to be digging a dark hole into the goblin army. Both the goblins and wolves would be dealt with when they touched the hole. The way the formation handled the enemy was akin to a neat freak, giving off a sense of madness.

"Look closely."

At this moment, a bonfire seemed to be lit in the center of the formation and 4 flaming birds flew out from it and spread orange and crimson flames in all 4 directions, obviously a summoned beast. But Raynesia had never heard of summoned beings like this. From what she knew, summoned beings ranged from the size of a fist to that of a puppy, she had never seen such powerful and dignified creatures.

"That is the Phoenix you can form a contract with at level 86, a high-level spirit with fire affinity. The summoners need to complete a very difficult quest before they are qualified to form a contract with such graceful and holy beast... what is wrong?"

(She asked me what is wrong?)

(That creature has flame on it?)

(Adventurers can... can summon such creatures, there should be a limit to such foul play correct?)

Raynesia finally understood.

Krusty was not putting on a brave face, this was how he acted naturally.

No wonder Takayama Misa said worrying was absurd.

No one could predict what would happen on the battlefield. But there were people in this world who were fine in this unpredictable battlefield and used their extraordinary experience no common man could hope to match to rule the arena.

The army this man was leading were also Adventurers who had accumulated overwhelming experience and training. Raynesia recognized from the bottom of her heart that the common sense of knights could not be applied on them.

Adventurers were an existence beyond Raynesia's comprehension.

The goblin general's giant mobile fortress exploded with a bang. The heavily-armored guards and gigantic ferocious goblins flew out from the shattered fortress. Krusty's forces continued to advance.

Raynesia heard an impossible voice.

... Well then, let's enjoy this sumptuous meal.

The calm words with a hint of joy definitely came from Krusty.

Raynesia did not have telepathic abilities, she couldn't have heard Krusty from so far away, but she did hear his voice.

Krusty swung his two-handed axe and pointed it at the enemy, his forces charged forward as if elongated black spears came out of the square formation. A group of warriors dual-wielding blades shredded through the goblins like thin clothes.

"We have finished the main course... Let's leave the rest to the nets spread out by our headquarters' tactician."

Takayama Misa closed her report file with a soft sound, her voice so calm she seemed to be saying something obvious.

Part 5

In the end they linked up just before dawn.

The resistance of the Sahuagin was stronger than expected, Ocypete took a lot of time to dock. Ocypete had a lot of functions installed as an experimental prototype, but it was basically a transport ship.

It was not a military amphibious assault landing craft.

It was hard to suppress enemies that could move freely in the water, so it was hard to execute bold attack maneuvers.

But at midnight, Naotsugu and Nyanta summoned griffons to ferry several players by air to reinforce the defenses of Choshi. With summoners on both sides of the coastline, it was only a matter of time before they repelled the Sahuagins.

"Wah, I didn't expect you to come Shiro-bou!"

Maryele smiled so happily.

Shiroe who appeared out of nowhere walked out from the town just as the sun was setting. He reorganized the limited manpower and established another defensive line at the north side of the farm.

Shiroe was the guild master of Log Horizon.

That meant he was one of the 11 guild masters that formed the Round Table Council, but he was not well-known.

The background behind the formation of the Round Table Council was no secret, so well-informed Adventurers all knew about Shiroe. But compared to Krusty or Issac who were the guild masters of major guilds, or Maryele with her wide social network, the number of people who knew his face was much lower.

If you talked to him, you would know that he was a good young man who valued friendships. But he seemed scary in the beginning... Maryele thought.

(He is a good kid! But that face! Those eyes! So scary!)

Maryele nodded as she made this conclusion, but Henrietta chided her, "Most Adventurers are good kids in Maryele's eyes."

Anyway, Shiroe's appearance was not well known, but the impact he brought to the battlefield was quite significant.

Even if he was not well-known, Shiroe was still the tactician for the expedition army. The morale would increase when headquarters sent reinforcements over.

Shiroe appeared in town the moment Ocypete arrived, making the defensive team think he was the one who led them here.

Maryele used this effect to the limit.

She raised her voice to motivate the defense team.

The team facing the unrelenting waves of Sahuagins recovered their fighting spirit when they heard news of reinforcements arriving and Maryele urging them on. With the artillery support by summoners conjuring creatures to perform super long range attacks, the beginners engaged the Sahuagin with renewed vigor and passion.

The corpses of the Sahuagin either were washed away by the tide or disappeared into thin air after some time, the fierce battle continued until midnight.

The Adventurers won the grueling fight at midnight.

The Adventurers taking part in the summer training camp were exhausted, relaxing in their own way at the port between Sand Leaf River and the beach.

The sentry and defensive tasks were handled by the reinforcements who still had energy to help. All those gathered here were the summer camp participants who fought the goblins and the Sahuagins.

Maryele was thinking of maintaining a more spirited attitude as a role model, but she ended up spreading her cape and laying flat on the ground.

(Fu... We somehow made it through...)

Crescent Moon Alliance had no experience with large-scale raids or defensive battles, Maryele had never commanded such a complicated battle line before.

She was a total amateur at this, the reason they succeeded was because of the passion and determination of the beginners, as well as the support of the veterans led by Naotsugu.

"Are you alright Mary-san?"

This voice was closer than she expected.

And just when she was thinking about him.

"Woo wah?"

Naotsugu sat beside Maryele who sprang up in surprise. He had changed into baggy shorts and summer shirt.

"Why are you making weird sounds Mary-san?"

"Wah, that was sly of you Naotsugu-yan, when did you change?"

"No, it's because... The armor is heavy and someone is taking my shift tonight so I can relax."

Maryele's relentless questions made Naotsugu gaze wander all over.

She looked around and saw their exhausted comrades moving slowly like zombies, hoping to change their clothes too.

"I-I-I... I need to change too?"

"Are you okay?"

Maryele pressed her temples. She had been using magic non-stop the whole day which made her head heavy and numb.

Clerics were the masters of healing, apart from standard healing spells, they could also cast all sorts of magic. If you focused only on defense and healing, the variety of skills of the cleric was the best among the healers.

In this group battle, Maryele did not form a party, running all over the battlefield by herself casting healing spells on all the parties she saw, a heal-and-run tactic.

She didn't think that was a wrong tactic to use, but it was more tiring than she imagined. Maryele experienced the feeling of exhausting all of her MP 10 times in a day, making her head hurt.

"Rest a bit more?"

"Woo hoo hoo..."

To be honest, Maryele didn't want to move at all.

"The bathhouse is still full anyway."

"There is a bathhouse?"

Bathhouses were new facilities in Akiba, Maryele was shocked that Choshi had such advanced installations.

"Of course there is. The reason why Akiba doesn't have shower rooms is because the crafting menu for Adventurers does not include shower facilities. Or rather, we can craft such facilities, but only for decorative purposes, they do have water storage or heating functions. When Elder Tales was just a game there was no need for us to bathe, but the People of the Land had to shower from the very beginning so they have the appropriate facilities to do so."

"Is...Is that so?"

Maryele held her head with her hands and fell.

So there were shower rooms if they visited one of the few homes of the People of the Land in Akiba?

Maryele recalled discovering Henrietta pouring hot water from a kettle to a basin to wipe her body secretly in the middle of the night. It almost ended in a big commotion. Just remembering Henrietta's scary face during that incident made her face glum.

"But we all rushed to the showers at the hotel and mayor's place, so it is full right now. By the way, the hotel is for men, the mayor's house is for ladies."

"Oh, now I know... I will enjoy the breeze here for a while more."

"Yes yes."

Naotsugu sat with his legs crossed.

Maryele spread her cape on the grass and sat lazily.

The two of them basked in the clear moonlight.

A gentle and soothing breeze made Maryele shift her gaze and look at Naotsugu.

Naotsugu looked at the bright and clear moon as he fanned Maryele using a big leaf from a tropical tree.

(Ah...)

Maryele could feel the remnants of the heat in her blood that boiled during the battle cooling down finally. It was thanks to this interesting man who accompanied her without a word that her raging emotions were finally calming down and gaining peace.

"Naotsugu-yan, let me ask you..."

"About what...?"

Naotsugu's leisurely voice gave Maryele the concrete feeling that the battle was really over, everyone survived and protected this town. Some of the Adventurers were hurt too badly and went back to the cathedral in Akiba, but the number was small.

"We did well right?"

"Of course, we protected the town successfully."

Maryele was aware that her smile was more brilliant than normal, it must be a giddy smile that she could not show in public, but she didn't mind at all.

Just for this moment, she wanted to immerse in the kind and gentle wind Naotsugu was giving her under the bright moonlight.

Part 6

There was a sound of a bell coming from the distance.

There was a refreshing fragrance and particles sparkling around him.

Rundelhous sat up on the marble bed with elaborate carvings.

(This is...)

He could see the night sky out the window. It should be nighttime right now.

In this room made of stone, the plants placed all around were spreading out shiny pollen that illuminated the room.

(I see, so this is... the cathedral.)

Rundelhous was able to comprehend. He had heard about this place, but this was his first time here. People of the Land were different from Adventurers after all, even if they prayed in church, they would not seek spiritual guidance in the cathedral.

The cathedral was one of the facilities related to the Adventurers, it was more like a magical architecture than a religious construction. Rundelhous followed the example of other People of the Land and had never visited it before.

(Anyway... Good, seems like I can move.)

He sat on the bed and moved his body carefully.

Right hand, left hand, both legs, shoulders... there seemed to be no problem, but he felt tired to the bones, probably an after-effect of respawning.

He heard that respawning in the cathedral deducted EXP, Rundelhous opened his status to check and was stunned.

The status screen of the Adventurers was much more detailed than he imagined. His stats were adjusted to reflect stats gained from his equipment, the details of how his equipment affects his stats were also displayed, his MP and HP were also shown in numerical values with increments of 0.1%.

He looked at his EXP gauge which had dropped significantly. It couldn't be helped, he not only respawned here, he had numerous resurrection spells cast on him as well, this was the price he must pay.

He was alive.

Rundelhous' chest was filled with a slew of emotions.

He was not after the identity or status of the Adventurers, nor was he after their way of life. Rundelhous was the 3rd son of a corrupted noble family, the freedom and sense of justice of the Adventurers who fought for the people were dazzling and stole his heart.

Rundelhous unconsciously followed his gaze and opened another tab on the status screen. He found the word Adventurer.

Name: Rundelhous Code

Class: Sorcerer

Subclass: Adventurer

Rundelhous stared blankly at these words for a long while.

(That's right, I do not have a subclass, that contract forced me to take on a new subclass Adventurer...)

Rundelhous checked the abilities of the subclass in a hurry, a list of unfamiliar abilities he heard about: 'ability to respawn in the cathedral', 'telepathy ability', 'adjustment to EXP gain', 'use of bank and warehouse', 'detailed status screen', there were also many more abilities Rundelhous didn't understand, and they were all listed together here.

(So many... If I have this power...)

He could not gain back the time he lost or change his past, but he wouldn't spend his nights feeling frustrated and helpless at his weakness.

More importantly, he could live in Akiba without hiding his identity. He could live together with the friends he had grown close to during the training camp. Rundelhous might be able to rebuild his old home, create a place to live life to the fullest.

Rundelhous tried to recollect.

He remembered an Adventurer that wanted to wipe out all these corrupt nobles.

That was what he wanted to be, but was cursed to never achieve. Rundelhous swore that given another chance, he wanted to become an Adventurer. He then reviewed this miracle he always dreamed of.

This small stony room was his new starting point. The serious young man with glasses was also an Adventurer that his two friends Minori and Tohya respected, and was also the guild master of their guild.

(That young man Shiroe should know about places I have never seen before...)

As Rundelhous immersed in the joy of respawning, he heard approaching footsteps.

"Rudy!"

Isuzu barged in, banging the stone doors. She looked both angry and perplexed, staring at Rundelhous from the entrance.

"Hi Miss Isuzu... Is anything wrong?"

"Is... Is anything wrong... You ask..."

She walked towards him in big strides and bent her upper body backwards.

Her head was in a taller position than the sitting Rundelhous, so he could not see her expression. He could only hear the sound of sniffing, but Isuzu's voice was definitely angry.

"Overexerting yourself so much, what if you die stupid Rudy!"

"Miss Isuzu, calling me stupid is too much, there are somethings you have to do even if you have to risk your life. Just like no one can put a collar on the free spirited Adventurers, no one can stop my battles."

"When I command you to wait, you have to wait properly!"

"You are being unreasonable..."

"You must wait!"

Isuzu's voice sounded aloof and Rundelhous felt anger rising from his heart.

But he realized something when he wondered why Isuzu was here.

Isuzu was the only companion who knew Rundelhous was a People of the Land. Actually, Minori noticed too, but the one who pressed Rundelhous for the truth and assisted him in achieving his dream was only Isuzu.

She being here right now meant she used 'Call of Home' to chase Rundelhous who respawned in the cathedral in Akiba.

"Sorry... I seem to have worried you."

The moment Rundelhous said these words, a punch so painful that it made him cry fell on his head.

Rundelhous didn't understand why he was hit, but as a noble who had lived to this age, he understood that he had to apologize repeatedly in a soothing voice when a woman was in this type of condition.

"Sorry Miss Isuzu, it's my fault." "I...I apologize, I won't make this mistake again." "Anyway, can you tell me why?"

He was hit 2-3 times every time he spoke, Rundelhous' head was heating up from the abuse and his conscious was starting to fade.

"I understand, I will listen to Miss Isuzu's command properly."

"Really?"

"Really, I swear to god."

"You must tell me about your childhood Rudy."

"Why must I...! I...I understand, I will talk."

"If you are so reckless, it won't be enough no matter how many lives you have."

"I am reflecting on my actions."

"Okay, shake." [2]

(Ah...?)

This word made Rundelhous look blankly at Isuzu.

Isuzu's cute freckled face seemed to be throwing a tantrum and angry at the same time. Only her eyes had a hint of shyness as she extended her hand gently.

(If you make such a face, I can only surrender right?)

Rundelhous gently placed his hand on hers in response.

This was a strange action that did not exist in this world. To Rundelhous, this was the reverse action of a knight guiding a lady, so it was somewhat embarrassing.

He heard from Isuzu later this was the action of dogs swearing fealty to their masters, which made him mad. But right now she had him cornered, he had no way of venting his frustration.

Seemed like Rundelhou was fated to never go against this young girl with freckles.

Part 7

Akiba's first expedition army returned with victory. This was named the East Expedition Army in the future as the west also sent out an expedition army to deal with the 'Suzaku Gate's Ghost Festival' incident at the same time.

The expedition army did not defeat the goblin king, they only trapped the invasion army in Sand Leaf peninsula and wiped them out. The whole war ended one week after Krusty's forces defeated the goblin general.

Shiroe and Krusty were looking out for reinforcements from 'Seven Falls' all this while, but there were no signs of them until the very end.

The fortress 'Seven Falls' they were watching closely should still have several thousand monsters inside. This was about a fifth of the whole goblin invasion army, but the numbers were not a big threat.

To measure military powers by numbers was a concept from the old world. In this alternate world where the difference in fighting power varied a lot, they could be as strong as a soldier or as mighty as a tank, so numbers were not an absolute gauge for military might. The Akiba expedition army's success proved this point.

The goblin king was still in the 'Seven Falls' along with several beasts of colossal proportions. The goblin shaman should be waiting inside as well.

It was more important to determine the threat of the remaining forces rather than their cold hard numbers.

They didn't leave 'Seven Falls' alone because it was hard to tackle. Even if there were some stubbornly strong monsters, the Round Table Council judged that with the strength of the Adventurers, it was just a matter of time before they raided them.

One of the reasons they postponed the raid was because they prioritized signing a treaty with 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' first.

The Round Table Council also had other considerations.

The Round Table Council set suitable rewards and announced a ton of quests, the contents of the quests included patrolling the northeast communities as well as raiding the remnants of the goblins.

Monsters like goblins were easy enemies for party-level groups, so there was no need to send out large armies to deal with them. Minori's party with their levels around 30 was able to fight them on equal grounds, which was the best evidence for this.

So the raiding quest was more suitable for beginner- and mid-level Adventurers instead of high-level veteran players. They were happy to take on these missions and many of them set out from Akiba to accomplish them. They roamed the forests and hills of the northeast region, making the People of the Land feel the Adventurers were active again.

By reducing the strength of the forces outside the citadel, 'Seven Falls' would also strengthen their defenses. If you took out the goblin king, the goblins would go out of control.

The goblins who lost their leader would spread out and raze the land, this was the main argument of Shiroe's that convinced the Round Table Council. Put simply, the action of sealing them in was preparation of raiding 'Seven Falls' in the future.

Shiroe just felt they should make full use of the current situation, but the people called his tactics villainous which left a bad taste in his mouth. Shiroe insisted there was no black or white in tactics, but there seemed to be plenty of holes in this self-assessment.

Shiroe did not know that most of the Adventurers in Akiba thought Shiroe was the mastermind who forced Princess Raynesia to go to the battlefield. That meant he conned the naive and beautiful princess and sent her out to fight with his honeyed words, giving off the impression of a very shrewd man. With this system, whenever the princess gained sympathy with her beautiful and kind demeanor, Shiroe's reputation would take a hit.

Shiroe who was unaware of this just had the feeling 'Why are so many people targeting me'. He was a bit bothered, but Henrietta encouraged him

and said: "Shiroe-sama's villain-level is far above the standard!" This comment gave him complicated feelings.

In this buffer time they earned, the Round Table Council and the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' signed a basic treaty, a mutual trade agreement treaty, and a peace treaty.

It had been a month since the Sand Leaf siege battle.

Maihama was holding a festival to celebrate the signing of the treaties.

Many noble families from the northeast of Yamato gathered in the beautiful streets of Maihama. The nobles' meeting was on hiatus, the lords who had returned to their territories gathered again in Maihama city. Different from the nobles' meeting, there were no obligations for these festivities so 2-3 of the nobles did not attend, but most of the nobles and merchants did.

Akiba was at its peak of economic development.

The big festival celebrating the signing of the treaties was a rare chance for them to make friends with Adventurers. For the nobles, this was a chance to tout the specialty products of their territories and secure major contracts. The nobles maintained their competitive natures, their motive and the heat of the festival triggered a fierce negotiation war.

But it was the same for all the guilds in Akiba, not only the production and merchant guilds, the battle guilds were also involved considering the elements of transport, so they were also here to enjoy this joyous festival.

All type of resources were going out of stock making your eyes dizzy, that was the state Yamato was in.

The hotels in downtown Maihama were all fully booked, a lot of residences became temporary hostels. The ones doing business here were mainly small merchant guilds or small guilds taking on escort missions. The businessmen of Akiba also wanted to reap a profit using this chance, bringing everything they could sell from food ingredients to armors and weapons, more than doubling Maihama's population.

The meeting room and the visitors' rooms in the courts were all open for the guests, even the knights' rooms were also used. The nobles struggled with their negotiations here, trying to come to terms with the major guilds.

Most of the players in Elder Tales were young. From the Earth's standard, their slyness and cunning was far below that of the experienced nobles, putting them at a disadvantage in the negotiations. But the nobles were unable to grasp what the Adventurers wanted and their delicate nature, which would sometimes end in confusion.

Both parties knew they were negotiating with strangers, so they had already steeled themselves and lowered their expectations, most of the negotiations ended peacefully.

This was a festival of gigantic proportion that happened only once in a hundred years.

To handle the increase in population, all the People of the Land working in the restaurants, shops, snack stands were working until their faces were red, the Adventurers were so engrossed in crafting and selling things that they forgot to sleep. Everyone made huge profits in the festival and used it to buy alcohol, meals, and clothes, making the consumption demand skyrocket.

At the courts, the butlers that wanted to make everything perfect gave out instructions, all the maids and helpers were busy running around fulfilling their tasks. But in this noisy atmosphere, it was impossible to welcome all the guests perfectly, a serious supervisor would probably faint from this.

If all the Adventurers requested the same service as the aristocrats, they would need at least three servants to take care of their meals, showers, and changing of clothes. Even the grandest Maihama court in the whole 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' wouldn't be able to handle that.

In the eyes of the nobles, the simple way of life of the Adventurers was astonishing. The smarter aristocrats would simplify their daily life during this period as well to accommodate the Adventurers. So the snobbish and extravagant aristocrats were more sensible during this festive period, the attendants and maids in the Maihama courts all breathed a sigh of relief.

The treaty-signing festival that included nobility, peasants, merchants, craftsmen, and even farmers was heading towards its climax.

Under the elegant music of the orchestra, 'Castle Cinderella' held a grand ball in the middle of its hall.

This hall was more spacious than the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice's', illuminated with countless candles and the magic light conjured by summoners. This ball hosted over 200 people from nobles, merchant bosses, and Adventurers.

Duke Sergead Corwen announced the opening of the ball after a simple speech, and a louder and clearer music welcomed the participants to enter.

Unlike before, there were Adventurers taking part as well, the knights and princesses hesitated in this situation, the first to enter the dance floor was Raynesia escorted by Krusty.

The young hero from Akiba who saved 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' from the goblin threat Krusty, and granddaughter of the clan Corwen who chaired the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' Raynesia. This couple tickled the curiosity of the crowd just with their names alone. And the expedition started because of Raynesia's visit to Akiba to ask for aid, the Adventurers were moved by her sincerity and took up arms with their righteous hearts, these events akin to stories of heroes would be chronicled in their history forever.

There was a rumor that Krusty challenged the goblin general 1-on-1 and defeated him, but contrary to the stories, he looked like a sensible young man. His calm face with glasses showed no signs of worry, his height was fitting of his title of a knight, but he didn't give the slow and heavy feeling that went with the description of a burly knight. Krusty in his classy tuxedo was just like a nobleman.

On the other hand, Raynesia had the reputation of the most beautiful princess in all of the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal'. She was wearing a formal dress with its color in layers going from light blue to light purple with fine embroidery sewed on with silver threads.

The design that covered her shoulders looked conservative, but the cuts on the chest and back were enough to attract the attention of men and accentuated her beautiful slender neck like a swan's.

The two of them walked to the center of the floor, drawing murmurs and sighs of praise from the crowd. It was a distinguished scene like that of a poem.

"Are you not going my lord?"

On the 2nd floor seat that overlooked the hall, Shiroe sipped his black rose tea as he watched.

Akatsuki was wearing the same pretty gown she had back in the 'Ancient Palace of Eternal Ice', probably forced by Henrietta.

The pearl-colored gown was the same as last time, but she had a translucent blue and purple shawl tonight. The light-colored dressing accentuated Akatsuki's black silky hair to the fullest.

"Not tonight, Krusty-san is playing the leading role right now, I can't last long anyway... I am so tired."

Akatsuki sat down quietly beside Shiroe when he finished.

This balcony had a small table and several chairs and there was no one else around. This was meant to be a resting area for the high-class nobles, but there was a ball with Adventurers taking part right now, the attendants had no time to take care of this place as they were busy attending to the ball that was just like a festival.

He could see everyone in the hall clearly from here.

The orchestra who were wearing similar costumes focused on playing; the wealthy merchants and the elderly nobles hogged in a corner to enjoy the banquet; the Adventurers who looked nervous; the People of the Land who talked boldly to the knights and merchants in a casual manner.

There were many stories playing out in this ball, Krusty and Raynesia went to the center of the hall and danced like blossoming flowers.

"..."

Akatsuki who was watching intently turned and looked Shiroe straight in the eyes. Akatsuki looked like she was about to say something, but she closed her lips as if she was giving up. She looked so lost and uneasy, but it made Shiroe feel so peaceful and at ease.

"Are you laughing my lord?"

"No I'm not."

"Yes, you are laughing."

Shiroe repeatedly denied it while Akatsuki kept pressing him, but she suddenly apologized in a gentle tone.

"I didn't help much this time, apart from fighting, I have been holding you back."

"That's not true Akatsuki."

Akatsuki's words stunned Shiroe, throughout this one month since they attended the nobles' meeting, Akatsuki had always been by his side. She had been collecting intelligence from the dark and performing bodyguard duties in the light. The two of them also visited Ri Gan's library and came into contact with a part of the mystery of this world.

Shiroe told her this, but Akatsuki still looked depressed.

(It is so hard to convey my gratitude.)

Shiroe just wanted to build and protect his home and this quiet young girl had always been helping him achieve his dreams. Shiroe who finally noticed this stood up without thinking.

"Let's dance."

"Ah?"

Shiroe stood up and gave his hand to the petite young girl looking at him from her chair. A round of applause sounded from the hall below and the second piece of music started to play.

The bright lights shining down at the hall illuminated the balcony on the 2nd floor from below.

"My lord, that... about dancing..."

"You have practiced right?"

Shiroe took her hand and helped her up.

Shiroe remembered that night where Akatsuki practiced her footwork in the palace courtyard. The steps that were complicated but not like martial arts were the dance steps Henrietta taught Shiroe.

The quiet girl who was about his age but looked so young was practicing her dance in secret in the cool night breeze, repeating the movements until they were a part of herself, reflecting the uncompromising nature of Akatsuki.

Only Shiroe knew this in the whole world.

"My lord... you cannot laugh at me."

"I am also a beginner, I won't laugh."

In the dim and narrow balcony on the second floor, the two members of Log Horizon danced awkwardly to the waltz playing in the hall below.

These were clumsy dance steps of the two who harbored concern for each other.

Part 8

Krusty and Raynesia danced to the tune of a waltz under the bright lights in the classy hall.

In Raynesia's eyes, Krusty was a big tiger.

Krusty who was like a towering city wall seemed to betray his image as the general of the expedition army as he guided his partner in a proper and elegant dance.

The court seemed to agree that he was a gentle and handsome young man (Raynesia heard about this from the maids), but having seen how he was on the battlefield, Raynesia just wanted to say "your eyes are just decorations made with ink."

(He is a tiger! This man is a tiger monster!)

He was a bit skinny among the knights... Someone commented, but that was because Krusty was very tall so he looked slender from far. With his hands on her waist from so close, she could feel his strong arms and thick chest. He was a different species of human from Raynesia... or rather, a different creature.

"What is it princess?"

"It is nothing Krusty-sama."

Raynesia made an expression that seemed like a smile to the surrounding nobles and Adventurers and answered in a low and unhappy voice.

Krusty was also keeping his voice down, with the hall filled with the noise of the music and chatter, there was no need to worry their conversation would be overheard.

People might be able to tell they were talking from the movements of their lips, but they would definitely judge it as a friendly interaction judging from their expressions and situation.

Raynesia understood that to the maids who were deprived of romantic topics, their conversation must have been interpreted as whispers of lovers, she had already heard about such rumors.

"...This is so infuriating."

"What is it?"

The most infuriating thing was Krusty's attitude of not denying these rumors. His denial might get rejected, but his cool attitude frustrated her to no end, she could not stand how Krusty was taking all this in stride.

"Nothing."

"You seems to be in a bad mood."

'It is your fault I am saying this and showing this attitude.' Raynesia said in her heart. But she was speechless the next moment when he said:

"Anyway, it is indeed my fault."

(Really, he answers the words in my mind! And he doesn't sound sorry at all!)

Raynesia sighed when she thought of the future.

Her grandfather adopted a very calm demeanor regarding this incidence. The treaty between the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' and the Round Table Council was signed on equal terms.

When East Yamato was facing the crisis of being razed by the goblins, Raynesia approached the Adventurers for aid as an individual, the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' held the utmost respect and gratitude for them, but they didn't owe any favors to the Adventurers.

Grandfather made this very clear to Raynesia.

(Simply put, I have to repay my debts to the Adventurers by myself...)

The ceremony and festival treated the Adventurers as the guests of honor, but the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' would not share the expenses of this war, which made Raynesia pale when she heard about this.

When Raynesia made the speech in Akiba, she was hoping for everyone to volunteer and help. She expected the 'League of Freedom Towns Eastal' to provide some sort of sponsorship or gift of thanks, but they were actually not doing anything for the Adventurers who got hurt in the expedition.

As Raynesia thought of these troubling things, she continued to dance gracefully thanks to her years of training.

One step right, another two steps right.

Quarter turn, left step, raise her hands and gently touch Krusty's fingers.

The steady flow of the flute, the bittersweet sound of the violin, Krusty and Raynesia danced in the mesmerizing melody that threatened to melt you away.

"Are you so unwilling?"

"It's not like that..."

The plan to appease the crowd was to send Raynesia out as an ambassador. In the culture of the nobles, noble women were symbols, they might be granted political positions for their beauty, with no expectation of them having any administrative talents.

According to her grandfather, 'Raynesia crossed this protective net on her own initiative', so there was no need to worry about this. Raynesia would be the ambassador for the embassy in Akiba, she would need to live her life traveling between the embassy and Castle Cinderella.

'... Since this is your debt, you need to repay the Adventurers by staying there according to proper etiquette correct?'

Her grandfather Duke Sergead said sternly, although his eyes were laughing. This was a rare expression, so this must be the best arrangement he could do for Raynesia.

Raynesia got even more depressed when she thought about this.

"3 meals provided with an afternoon nap included."

"Ah?"

"3 meals provided with an afternoon nap included."

Krusty said with an unpleasant and resigned voice.

"You are going to be the ambassador in Akiba correct? Akiba will be more developed in the future, the nobles will want to have an office or place for negotiations, so I understand why they want to set up a place in Akiba, the effect should be good... But Adventurers like us are not really interested in the daily life of the aristocrats, the number of tea parties or banquets will be very few. Since the princess is coming to such a city, I feel that you should enjoy the shut-in life of 3 meals provided with an afternoon nap included."

Krusty's sudden hint filled Raynesia's chest with hope.

Could this be the situation she longed for?

Leaving her parents' side meant not being under their supervision, this might be her chance to fulfill her dreams of Operation 'Living 3 days Lazily Without Showering'.

"I think 3 days should be an acceptable range."

Krusty's words that seemed to have read her mind made Raynesia blush. This despicable monster was so hard to deal with, she furiously tightened both hands, but it only felt like the weight of a bird to Krusty.

For the uninformed audience, this scene was the decorated young knight leading a beautiful princess in a dance, their tender whispers and words of love made the sorrowful princess blush.

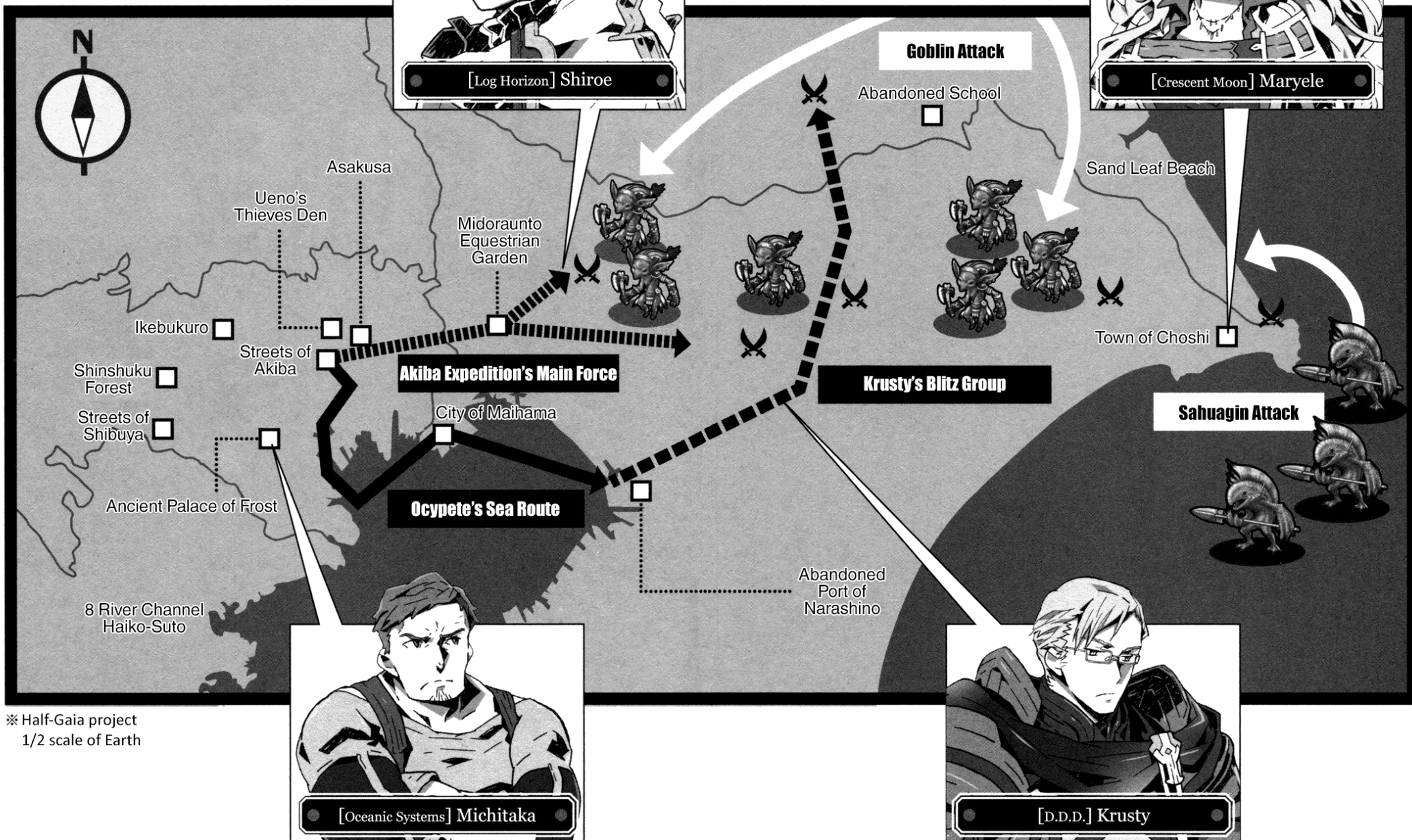
But the rumors might not match the reality, and even if the rumors were true, correlation did not imply causation, so only the subjects themselves knew the details.

"I can finally return to my dissolute life, don't you agree Krusty-sama?"

"That might be hard to say, the princess seems to have the tendency to self-destruct."

The two of them squabbled as they continued to dance, they were like rivals but also accomplices, moving to the music that celebrated the coming peace.

Round Table Council - Battle Map



[ELDER TALES]

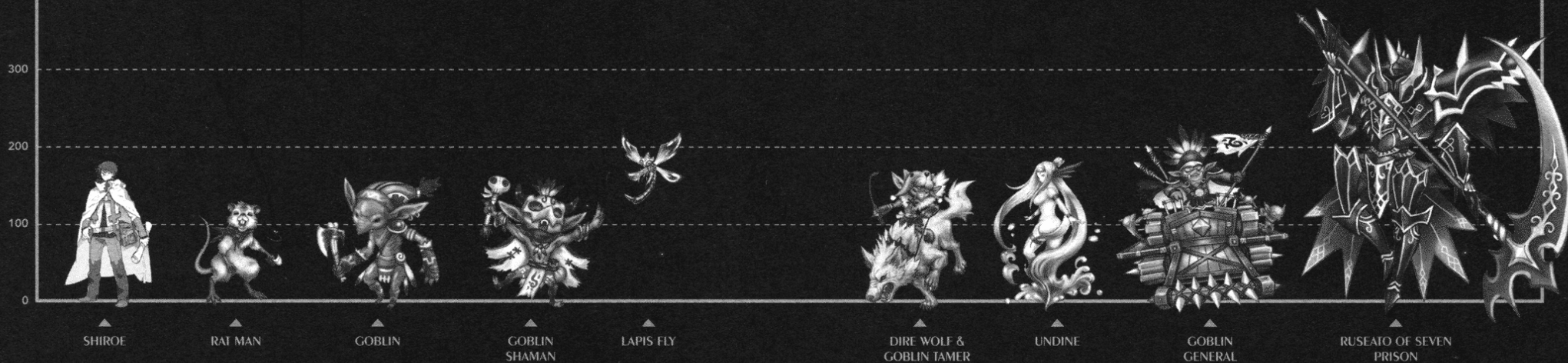
〈エルダー・テイル〉モンスターファイル 2

MONSTER FILE

2

〈エルダー・テイル〉の陰の主役・モンスターを徹底紹介する第2弾!!

illustration: 橋本モチチ



Elder Tale Monster File 2

Introducing the Elder Tale main characters behind the scene:
Monsters! Round 2

<table width=80%><tr><td colspan="2">

ゴブリン・シャーマン
緑小鬼の呪術師

GOBLIN SHAMAN



▶ LEVEL: 29~33

▶ STRENGTH: NORMAL

▶ FOUND IN: HILLS OR DUNGEONS

HAVE HIGH MAGICAL POWERS AMONG THE GOBLINS, A UNIT THAT CAN USE SEVERAL SPELLS. USUALLY CAST LOW LEVEL MAGIC, BUT BEGINNERS MIGHT LACK THE ABILITY TO DEFEND AGAINST THEM MIGHT RISK DYING IN THEIR HANDS. THE TERRIFYING FEATURE OF THE GOBLINS IS THEIR LARGE VARIETY OF TROOPS TYPE, IF GOBLIN SHAMAN JOIN FORCES WITH ALLIES OF DIFFERENT JOBS, THEY WILL BE A TROUBLESOME OPPONENT.

ラットマン
鼠人間

RAT MAN



▶ LEVEL: 5~45

▶ STRENGTH: NORMAL

▶ FOUND IN: UNDERGROUND OR DAMP AREAS

A TYPE OF DEMIHUMAN, PHYSICAL APPEARANCE IS BETWEEN 'MAN WITH HEAD OF A RAT' AND 'RAT STANDING UPRIGHT'. HEIGHT IS ABOUT A MIDDLE SCHOOLER, IT IS HARD TO TELL ITS BODY SHAPE AS IT HAS SMOOTH AND SEEMINGLY MOIST FUR ALL OVER. IT CAN USE SIMPLE TOOLS. IT HAS LOW BATTLE POWERS AMONG SIMILAR MONSTER TYPES, BUT IT'S REPRODUCTION RATE AND THE ABILITY TO SPREAD DISEASE MAKES IT A DIFFICULT ENEMY TO FIGHT, THEY WILL MOVE IN GROUPS IN DUNGEONS.

ラピスフライ

LAPIS FLY



▶ LEVEL: 73~89

▶ STRENGTH: PARTY

▶ FOUND IN: HILLS OR NEAR RIVER

A POWERFUL INSECT TYPE MONSTER IN THE FORM OF A LARGE DRAGONFLY, HAS BEAUTIFUL BLUE GLASS-LIKE SHELL AND TRANSPARENT RAINBOW WINGS, A FEW ITEMS NEED THIS AS A CRAFTING INGREDIENT. THEREFORE A LOT OF ADVENTURERS ATTEMPT TO HUNT THEM, BUT IT HAS HIGH EVASION RATE UNIQUE TO FLYING MONSTERS AND WILL RUN AWAY AT THE SIGNS OF ANY TROUBLES. THIS MODE OF OPERATION MAKE THIS INGREDIENT HARD TO HUNT, YOU CAN MAKE A HUGE PROFIT IF YOU SELL IT IN THE MARKET.

ゴブリン
緑小鬼

GOBLIN



▶ LEVEL: 5~46

▶ STRENGTH: NORMAL

▶ FOUND IN: HILLS OR DUNGEONS

A TYPE OF DEMIHUMAN THAT IS INFAMOUS, IT IS SHORT, SKINNY, UGLY AND TWISTED. HEIGHT IS ABOUT 150CM, ONE OF THE EVIL FORCES IN NORTH EAST YAMATO ARCHIPELAGO. TENACIOUS, STRONG REPRODUCTION ABILITY, CRUEL AND EVIL. LIKES MILITARY ACTIONS, HAS PRIMITIVE TRIBAL COMMUNITIES AND DIVIDE INTO DIFFERENT JOBS TO DO. WILL SOMETIMES ENSLAVE OTHER RACES AND ABSORB THEM INTO THEIR SOCIETY. MOST OF THEM FORMS PARTY SIZED GROUPS, WILL OCCASIONALLY HAVE KING BUILD A FORTRESS AS ITS BASE.

<tr><td width=50% valign="top">Goblin Shaman

Level: 29-33

Strength: Normal

Found in: Hills or dungeons

Has high magical powers among the goblins, a unit that can use several spells. Usually casts low-level magic, but beginners lacking the ability to defend against them might risk dying at their hands. The terrifying feature of the goblins is their large variety of troop types, if goblin shaman join forces with allies of different jobs, they will be a troublesome opponent.<td width=50% valign="top">Rat man

Level: 15-45

Strength: Normal

Found in: Underground or damp areas.

A type of demihuman, physical appearance is between 'man with head of a rat' and 'rat standing upright'. Height is about a middle-schooler's, it is hard to tell its body shape as it has smooth and seemingly moist fur all over. It can use simple tools. It has low battle powers among similar monster types, but its reproduction rate and the ability to spread disease makes it a difficult enemy to fight, they will move in groups in dungeons.<tr><td width=50% valign="top">Lapis Fly

Level: 73-89

Strength: Party

Found in: Hills or near river

A powerful insect-type monster in the form of a large dragonfly, has a beautiful blue glass-like shell and transparent rainbow wings, a few items need this as a crafting ingredient. Therefore a lot of Adventurers attempt to hunt them, but it has the high evasion rate unique to flying monsters and will run away at the sign of any trouble. This mode of operation makes this ingredient hard to hunt, you can make a huge profit if you sell it in the market.<td width=50% valign="top">Goblin

Level: 5-46

Strength: Normal

Found in: Hills or dungeons

A type of demihuman that is infamous, it is short, skinny, ugly, and twisted. Height is about 150cm, one of the evil forces in the northeast Yamato archipelago. Tenacious, strong reproduction ability, cruel, and evil. Likes military actions. Has primitive tribal communities and divides into different jobs to do. Will sometimes enslave other races and absorb them into their

society. Most of them form party-sized groups, will occasionally have king
build a fortress as its base.<tr><td colspan="2" valign="top">

ゴブリン・ジェネラル
緑小鬼の将軍

GOBLIN GENERAL



▶ LEVEL: 62

▶ STRENGTH: RAID 1

▶ FOUND IN: FORTRESS OR DUNGEONS

A UNIT WITH STRONG FIGHTING PROWESS AMONG THE GOBLINS, CAPABLE OF COMMANDING OTHERS. THERE ARE SEVERAL GENERALS WORKING UNDER THE GOBLIN KING, BUT THERE ARE UNABLE TO USE BRILLIANT TACTICS SINCE THEY ARE GOBLINS AFTER ALL. THEY ATTACK BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THEIR NUMBERS. THE GOBLIN GENERALS HAS THE ABILITY RAISE THE MORALE OF HIS ARMY BY STANDING ON TOP OF HIS MOBILE FORTRESS, INCREASING THE GOBLINS BATTLE ABILITY WHICH IS A TROUBLESOME SKILL. HIS STAMINA AND STRENGTH IS ALSO BEYOND NORMAL GOBLINS.

ダイアウルフ ゴブリン・テイマー
魔狂狼と緑小鬼の調教師

DIRE WOLF & GOBLIN TAMER



▶ LEVEL: 19~46

▶ STRENGTH: PARTY

▶ FOUND IN: HILLS OR DUNGEONS

DRIVEN INSANE AND BECOMING GIGANTIC BY MAGIC AND THE MOONLIGHT, DIRE WOLVES ARE PARTNERED WITH GOBLIN TAMERS. GOBLIN TAMERS CAN USE SPECIAL CURSES AND SKILLS TO RAISE THE COMBAT ABILITY OF THE DIRE WOLVES THEY BREED. A TOUGH FOR THAT CAN MOVE FAST AND ATTACK MULTIPLE TIMES, THEY FREQUENTLY BREAK THROUGH THE VANGUARDS OF THE ADVENTURERS. THE BASIC WAY OF DEFEATING THEM IS TO CONCENTRATE AND DEFEAT ONE OF THEM, THEY ARE EASY TO TAKE DOWN IF YOU SEPARATE THEM.

<tr><td valign="top">Goblin General

Level: 62

Strength: Raid 1

Found in: Fortress or dungeons

A unit with strong fighting prowess among the goblins, capable of commanding others. There are several generals working under the goblin king, but they are unable to use brilliant tactics since they are goblins after all. They attack by taking advantage of their numbers. The goblin general has the ability to raise the morale of his army by standing on top of his mobile fortress, increasing the goblins' battle ability which is a troublesome skill. His stamina and strength is also beyond normal goblins'.

<td valign="top">Dire Wolf & Goblin Tamer

Level: 19-46

Strength: Party

Found in: Hills or dungeons

Driven insane and becoming gigantic by magic and the moonlight, dire wolves are partnered with goblin tamers. Goblin tamers can use special curses and skills to raise the combat ability of the dire wolves they bred. A tough foe that can move fast and attack multiple times, they frequently break through the vanguards of the Adventurers. The basic way of defeating them is to concentrate and defeat one of them, they are easy to take down if you separate them.

<tr><td colspan="2" valign="top">

しち かんごく
七なる監獄のルセアート

RUSEATO OF SEVEN PRISON



▶LEVEL: 95

▶STRENGTH: RAID 1

▶FOUND IN: DUNGEONS

A POWERFUL 'FULL RAID' LEVEL MONSTER THAT APPEARS IN THE QUEST 'THE NINE PRISONS OF HEROS'. IN THE 'PRISON OF THE KNIGHT', THERE IS AN ACTIVE SEAL THAT PARALYZE ALL HEALING AND MAGE CLASS PLAYERS. YOU CAN RETURN YOUR ALLIES TO NORMAL BY ACTIVATING THE MECHANISM TO UNDO THE SEAL, BUT IT WILL ALSO STRENGTHEN RUSEATO AS WELL, GOING TO EITHER WHITE KNIGHT OR DARK KNIGHT MODE AND ATTACK WITH MAGIC. A STRONG OPPONENT THAT NEED TO BE ANALYZED FROM THE TACTICAL LEVEL.

ウンディーネ

UNDINE



▶LEVEL: 19~43

▶STRENGTH: NORMAL OR PARTY

▶FOUND IN: NEAR WATER

A TYPE SPIRIT THAT CONTROLS WATER ELEMENTS, THEY OFTEN APPEARS TO ASSIST OR RESIST THE ADVENTURERS IN THE ELDER TALE WORLD THAT IS RICH IN MOTHER NATURE. A THREATENING MONSTER, SUMMONERS ARE ABLE TO CONTRACT AND CONJURE THEM AFTER COMPLETING SPECIFIC QUESTS. THE UNDINE HAS POWERFUL ABILITIES AND IS BEAUTIFUL IN APPEARANCE, SO IT IS POPULAR AMONG THE SUMMONERS. THE ABILITY TO PRODUCE WATER IS HELD IN HIGH REGARD AFTER THE APOCALYPSE.

<tr><td valign="top">Ruseato of Seven Prison

Level: 95

Strength: Raid 1

Found in: Dungeons

A powerful 'Full Raid' level monster that appears in the quest 'The Nine Prisons of Heroes'. In the 'Prison of the Knight', there is an active seal that paralyze all healing and mage class players. You can return your allies to normal by activating the mechanism to undo the seal, but it will also strengthen Ruseato as well, going to either white knight or dark knight mode and attack with magic. A strong opponent that needs to be analyzed from the tactical level.<td valign="top">Undine

Level: 19-43

Strength: Normal or Party

Found in: Near water

A spirit that controls water elements, they often appear to assist or resist the Adventurers in the Elder Tales world that is rich in Mother Nature. A threatening monster, summoners are able to contract and conjure them after completing specific quests. The Undine has powerful abilities and is beautiful in appearance, so it is popular among the summoners. The ability to produce water is held in high regard after the Catastrophe.



Fragrant green world, blue oceans blue sky, yet somewhere out there the imaginary world of HORIZON is home to dragons and gnomes, monsters and devils. With a burden weighing upon your soul, go forth. O winged one, achieve more! This land spreads out before you like a blank paper; make your mark on it!

[TERMINOLOGY]

▶ ELDER TALE

USING A SWORD AND MAGIC WORLD AS ITS THEME, IT IS THE LARGEST ONLINE GAME IN THE WORLD. WITH ITS PROUD 50 YEARS HISTORY, IT IS AN MAJOR LOVE BY ITS HAPPORE PLAYERS.

▶ CATASTROPHE

THE INCIDENT WHERE ELDER TALE PLAYERS ARE TRAPPED IN THE GAME WORLD. THE DAY THE 10TH EXPANSION PACK "THE NOVAPHERE PIONEER" WENT LIVE, ALL 30,000 JAPANESE PLAYER WHO WERE ONLINE WAS TRAPPED.

▶ ADVENTURE

A TERM DESCRIBING ALL ELDER TALE PLAYERS. THE PLAYER'S OWN IDENTITY, YOU CAN GET YOUR NEWBORN CLASS AND RACE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE GAME. IT IS MAINLY USED BY THE NPC WHEN ADDRESSING THE PLAYERS.

▶ ALTERNATE WORLD

SHIROE AND THE OTHERS ARE TRAPPED IN ELDER TALE THAT WAS TURNED INTO THE ALTERNATE WORLD.

▶ GUILD

A GROUP FORMED BY MULTIPLE PLAYERS. MEMBERS CAN CONTACT EACH OTHER EASY TO GO ON ADVENTURES TOGETHER. IT IS EASY TO TRADE ITEMS TOO. MANY PLAYERS JOIN GUILDS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ITS CONVENIENCE.

▶ ROUND TABLE COUNCIL

THE GOVERNING BODY OF ALBA FORMED UNDER SHIROE'S PROPOSAL. IT'S 11 MEMBERS INCLUDE THE GUILD MASTER OF BIG BATTLE GUILDS, MAJOR PRODUCTION GUILDS AND THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL THE SMALL GUILDS, LEADING THE REVOLUTION IN ALBA.

▶ JOB FOR-NOZ

GUILD STARTED BY SHIROE AFTER THE APOCALYPSE. PIONEER MEMBERS ARE AVALISBULI, NAOTSUBULI AND NYANTA. THE THING MINORI AND TORVA JOINED SOON AFTER. IT'S BASE IS IN THE SUBAL SCENE OF ALBA. AN ABANDONED BUILDING THAT HAS A OLD GIANT TREE GROWING OUT OF IT.

▶ UAWUWUZI MOON ALLIANCE

LEAD BY MAYVEL. IT'S A GUILD FORMED WITH THE PURPOSE OF SUPPORTING MID-LEVEL PLAYERS. MAYVEL'S GOOD FRIEND FROM HIGH SCHOOL, MINNETTA ACTS AS ITS ACCOUNTANT.

▶ MODEL OF THE JAZZ

THE WAY NPC CALLS THEMSELVES. THEIR NUMBER HAS GROWN A LOT AFTER THE APOCALYPSE. THEY NEED TO EAT AND SLEEP. IF YOU DO NOT USE YOUR STATUS MENU TO CONFIRM, IT IS HARD TO DIFFERENTIATE THEM FROM OTHER PLAYERS.

▶ HALF GAIJA PROJECT

THE PROJECT ELDER TALE INCORPORATES WITH THE GOAL TO RECREATE THE WORLD WITH HALF ITS SCALE. ITS GAIJA AND GECORAFY IS SIMILAR TO REAL EARTH, BUT THE DISTANCE HAS BEEN SHORTEN TO HALF, AND THE AREA IS ONLY A SQUARE.

▶ ANCIENT TIMES

THE SETTING BY THE DEVELOPERS OF THE ONLINE GAME ELDER TALE. A TERM FOR THE FALLEN CIVILIZATION IN THE PAST. IT IS BASED ON THE REAL WORLD CIVILIZATION AND TECHNOLOGY. THE ABANDONED METROS AND BUILDINGS ARE THE LEGACY OF ANCIENT TIMES.

▶ DEBAUCHERY TEA PARTY

A GROUP THAT SHIROE, NAOTSUBULI, NYANTA STAY IN FOR A PERIOD OF TIME. IT WAS ACTIVE FOR 2 YEARS, BUT DID NOT OPERATE AS A GUILD. BUT IT IS A LEGENDARY ORGANIZATION IN ELDER TALE, AND IS STILL FAMOUS NOW.

▶ FAIRY RING

TRANSPORT DEVICE LOCATED IN THE PLAINS. THE TRANSPORT LOCATION IS AFFECTED BY THE LUNAR CYCLE. IF YOU USE IT AT THE WRONG TIME, THERE IS NO WAY OF KNOWING WHERE YOU WOULD GO. WITH SUPPORTING THE INTERNET FOR GUILDS OUT OF THE QUESTION AFTER THE APOCALYPSE, ALMOST NO ONE CAN USE THEM.

▶ NOZU

A UNIT TO DESCRIBE SURFACE AREA IN ELDER TALE. IT MIGHT BE A PIECE OF PLAIN, A DUNGEON, A CITY AND ALSO A SMALL AREA LIKE A ROOM IN THE HOTEL. CAN BE PURCHASE ACCORDING TO THE DISPLAYED PRICE.

▶ UAWUWUWA

THE WORLD NAME IN A GAME MADE BY "HALF GAIJA PROJECT". EQUIVALENT TO "THE EARTH" IN THE REALITY WORLD.

▶ SKILL

A VARIETY OF ABILITY USABLE BY ADVENTURERS. CAN BE LEARN BY LEVELING UP MAIN CLASS OR SUBCLASS. ALL GUILDS CAN BE DIVIDED TO NOVICE, INTERMEDIATE, ULTIMATE AND SECRET. THESE 4 LEVELS, CAN BE LEVELLED BY TRAINING THE SKILLS.

MAIN CLASSES

IT DECIDES THE PLAYERS' BATTLE ABILITY IN ELDER TALE. WHEN A PLAYER STARTS THE GAME, THEY CAN CHOOSE FROM 12 UNIQUE CLASSES, CATEGORIZED INTO WARRIOR CLASSES, WEAPON-BASED CLASSES, HEALER CLASSES AND MAZE CLASSES. THERE ARE 3 CLASSES FROM EACH CATEGORY, A TOTAL OF 12.

SUB CLASSES

HAVE NO DIRECT RELATION TO BATTLES, BUT A CONVENIENT SKILL TO HAVE WHILE PLAYING THE GAME. COMPARED TO THE 12 CLASSES, THERE ARE OVER 50 SUBCLASSES, FROM CONVENIENT JOBS TO JOKE SUBCLASSES, IT HAS A WIDE VARIETY MIXED IN.

AKIBA CITY

ONE OF THE PLAYER CITIES IN YAMATO. IT'S POSITION IS RELATIVE TO REAL JAPAN'S AKIBA.

CRESCENT ARCHIPELAGO YAMATO

THE WORLD OF SERGESEA IS BASED ON THE REAL WORLD. CRESCENT ARCHIPELAGO YAMATO IS EQUIVALENT TO THE REGION OF JAPAN, DIVIDED INTO EZZO EMPIRE, FOUPLAND DUKEOM, NINETAL DOMINION, LEAGUE OF FREEDOM CITIES EASTAL AND HOLY EMPIRE WESTELAND. THESE 5 AREAS.

CAST TIME

THE TIME NEEDED TO PREPARE BEFORE ACTIVATING A SKILL. IT DIFFERS FROM SKILL TO SKILL. POWERFUL SKILLS USUALLY HAVE LONGER CAST TIME. YOU CAN MANEUVER WHILE CASTING COMBAT SKILLS, BUT ANY MAGICAL SPELLS WILL BE INTERRUPTED IF YOU MOVE WHILE CASTING.

WOLIOZ BIZO

THE EFFECT OF UNABLE TO MOVE YOUR BODY TEMPORARILY AFTER USING A SKILL. UNABLE TO MOVE OR ACT UNTIL SKILL STIFFNESS WEARS OFF.

RECAST TIME

AFTER USING A SKILL, THE TIME NEEDED TO USE IT AGAIN. THIS RESTRICTION PREVENTS PLAYERS FROM SPAMMING A SPECIFIC SKILL. SOME SKILLS HAVE THE RESTRICTION OF USING IT ONCE PER DAY.

COOL DOWN

ONE OF THE BASIC SKILLS ALL ADVENTURERS CAN LEARN. CAN INSTANTLY TELEPORT TO THE LAST VISITED SAFE ZONE WITH A CATHEDRAL. HAVE A COOL DOWN OF 34 HOURS.

RAID

REQUIRES MORE ADVENTURERS THAN THE STANDARD PARTY OF 6 TO BATTLE, ALSO USED TO DESCRIBE A LARGE GROUP OF PLAYERS. MOST WELL KNOWN ARE THE 34 PLAYERS' FULL RAID AND THE 96 PLAYERS' LEGION RAID.

RACE

THE WORLD OF SERGESEA HAS ALL KINDS OF HUMANOID RACES. ADVENTURERS CAN CHOOSE HUMAN, ELF, DWARF, HALF-ELF, WEREWOLF, WOLF-PAN, FOX-TAIL AND RACE OF CEREMONY. THESE 8 RACES, KNOWN AS THE KIND HUMAN RACES.

MAIN CLASSES

MAGIC ATTACK CLASSES



SORCERER

STRONG AT DEALING DIRECT DAMAGE TO OPPONENTS.



SUMMONER

STRONG AT SUMMONING AND MANIPULATING MYTHICAL BEASTS AND SPIRITS.



ENCHANTER

STRONG AT THE CONTROL OF BATTLE STATUS AND MP.

HEALING CLASSES



CLERIC

THE ULTIMATE HEALER BOASTING OF THE GREATEST HEALING ABILITY.



DRUID

A MAGIC-TYPE HEALING CLASS THAT ALLIES WITH THE NATURAL AND SPIRITS



KANNAGI

A PREVENTIVE-TYPE HEALING CLASS THAT BLOCKS OFF DAMAGE.

WEAPON ATTACK CLASSES



ASSASSIN

A PURE ATTACKER PROFICIENT IN THE USE OF DIVERSE WEAPONS.



SWASHBUCKLER

A VERSATILE, DUAL-BLADED TYPE OF GUERRILLA-LIKE FORCE.



BARD

A LIGHT-ARMORED WARRIOR FLUENT IN MANY "SONGS" OF MAGICAL EFFECTS.

WARRIOR CLASSES



GUARDIAN

WIELDS THE HIGHEST DEFENSIVE ABILITY AND ABILITIES THAT GATHERS ENEMIES BY AGGRO.



SAMURAI

USES JAPANESE-STYLED EQUIPMENT, AND WIELDS POWERFUL SKILLS.



MONK

A BALANCE CLASS THAT LACKS ARMAMENTS BUT EXCELS IN EVASION.

Log Horizon

Terminology

Elder Tales

Using a sword and magic world as its theme, it is the largest online game in the world. With its proud 20 years history, it is an MMORPG loved by its hardcore players.

Catastrophe

The incident where Elder Tales players are trapped in the game world. The day the 12th expansion pack 'The Novasphere Pioneer' went live, all 30,000 Japanese players who were online was trapped.

Adventurer

A term describing all Elder Tales players, the player's own identity. You can set your height, class, and race at the beginning of the game. It is mainly used by the NPC when addressing the players.

People of the land

The way NPC calls themselves. Their number has grown a lot after the Catastrophe, they need to eat and sleep. If you do not use your status menu to confirm, it is hard to differentiate them from players.

Half Gaia project

The project Elder Tales implements with the goal to recreate the world with half its scale. Its shape and geography is similar to real Earth, but the distance has been shortened to half, and the area is only a quarter.

Ancient times

The setting by the developers of the online game Elder Tales, a term for the fallen civilization in the past. It is based on the real world civilization and technology. The abandoned metros and buildings are the legacy of ancient times.

Alternate world

Shiroe and the others are trapped in an Elder Tales that has turned into the alternate world.

Guild

A group formed by multiple players, members can contact each other easily to go on adventures together, it is easy to trade items too. Many players join guilds to take advantage of its convenience.

Round Table Council

The governing body of Akiba formed under the proposal of Shiroe. Its 11 members include the guild masters of big battle guilds, major production guilds, and the representatives of all the small guilds, leading the revolution in Akiba.

Log Horizon

Guild started by Shiroe after the Catastrophe, pioneer members are Akatsuki, Naotsugu, and Nyanta. The twins Minori and Tohya joined soon after. Its base is in the rural edge of Akiba, an abandoned building that has a old giant tree growing out of it.

Crescent Moon Alliance

Lead by Maryele, it's a guild formed with the purpose of supporting mid-level players. Maryele's good friend from highschool Henrietta acts as its accountant.

Debauchery Tea Party

A group that Shiroe, Naotsugu, Nyanta stayed in for a period of time. It was active for 2 years, but did not operate as a guild. But it is a legendary organization in Elder Tales, and is still famous now.

Fairy Ring

Transport device located in the plains, the transport location is affected by the lunar cycle. If you use it at the wrong time there is no way of knowing where you would go. With surfing the internet for guides out of the question after the Catastrophe, almost no one can use them.

Zone

A term to describe an unit of area. It might cover a plain, a dungeon, a city, or even a hotel or some small areas, can be purchased at the displayed price.

Serdesea^[3]

The world's name in a game made by the Half Gaia Project. Equivalent to the "Earth" in the reality world.

Skill

A variety of abilities usable by Adventurers, can be learned by leveling up main class or subclass. All skills can be divided by novice, intermediate, ultimate, and secret these 4 levels, can be leveled by training the skills.<td width=50% valign="top">Main Class

It decides the player's battle ability in Elder Tales. When a player start the

game, they can choose from 12 unique classes, categorized into warrior class, weapon-based class, healer class, and mage class. There are 3 classes from each category, a total of 12.

Sub Class

Have no direct relation to battling, but a convenient skill to have while playing the game. Compared to the 12 classes, there are over 50 subclasses, from convenient jobs to joke subclasses, it has a wide variety mixed in.

Akiba City

One of the player cities in Yamato, its position is relative to real Japan's Akiba.

Crescent Archipelago Yamato

The world of Serdesea is based on the real world. Crescent Archipelago Yamato is equivalent to the region of Japan, divided into Ezzo Empire, Fourland dukedom, Ninetail dominion, League of Freedom Towns Eastal and Holy empire Westelande these 5 areas.

Cast time

The time needed to prepare before activating a skill. It differs from skill to skill, powerful skills usually have longer cast time. You can maneuver while casting combat skills, but any magic spells will be interrupted if you move while casting.

Motion Bind

The effect of being unable to move your body temporarily after using a skill. Unable to move or act until skill stiffness wears off.

Recast time

After using a skill, the time needed to use it again. This restriction prevents a player from spamming a specific skill. Some skills have the restriction of using it once per day.

Call of Home

One of the basic skills all Adventurers can learn. Can instantly teleport to the last visited safe zone with a cathedral. Has a cool down of 24 hours.

Raid

Requires more Adventurers than the standard party of 6 to battle, also used to describe a large group of players. Most well-known are the 24 players 'Full Raid' and the 96 players 'Legion Raid'.

Race

The world of Serdesea has all kind of humanoid races. Adventurers can choose human, elv, dwarf, half-alv, werecat, wolf fang, foxtail, and race of ceremony these 8 races, known as the 'kind human races'.

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{| class="wikitable" |- !colspan="4"|Main Classes |- !Magic Attack  
Classes!!Healing Classes!!Weapon Attack Classes!!Warrior Classes |-  
|Sorcerer
```

Strong at dealing direct damage to opponents. ||Cleric

The ultimate healer boasting of the greatest healing ability. ||Assassin

A pure attacker proficient in the use of diverse weapons. ||Guardian

Wields the highest defensive ability and abilities that gathers enemies by aggro. |- |Summoner

Strong at summoning and manipulating mythical beasts and spirits. ||Druid

A magic-type healing class that allies with the natural and spirits.

||Swashbuckler

A versatile, dual-bladed type of guerrilla-like force. ||Samurai

Uses Japanese-styled equipment, and wields powerful skills. |- |Enchanter

Strong at the control of battle status and MP. ||Kannagi

A preventive-type healing class that blocks off damage. ||Bard

A light-armored warrior fluent in many "songs" of magical effects. ||Monk

A balance class that lacks armaments but excels in evasion. |}

Afterword

Greetings, it's been a month, I am Mamare.

I am grateful for your purchase of Log Horizon 4 The end of the game Part 2, the story is the 2nd part of the previous volume, Log Horizon 3 The end of the game Part 1, concluding all the stories from the previous month! part 2 is the same as part 1, with plenty of wonderful contents.

As usual, the afterword of Log Horizon will be a long story about Mamare(younger sister), (this fact has now been revealed official!). But it is not like a report this time.

Actually, my family found out.

Maoyuu Maou Yuusha has published for 8 months, I have not said a word about it, but I have been discovered by my relatives.

Uncle asks, "Eh, is it a publisher like Iwanami Shoten?" which almost made me collapse. No it isn't, it is not this type of academic or theoretical books, it is lighter reading materials. The light doesn't mean illumination or correct. Wait, it doesn't mean flight either okay? Besides, my family is brother and sister, not brothers. (TL: Light, Right and Wright is pronounced the same in Japanese.)

How should I say this, I mean light, the intonation needs to be lighter, it is closer to margarine instead of butter, something that is vegan and low in calories.

Allow me to withhold the contents of my works, it is definitely not something shameful... Mamare defends in a one sided manner.

This came into light because my middle schooler nephew point this out directly during a family meeting. It was exposed through twitter, I leaked so much local info out there, no wonder I have been discovered. As an old boy of St Francis kindergarten, I want to teach him some lesson on keeping quiet. But he is also one of the readers that I am grateful to have, Mamare falls into a dilemma.

The relatives interrogated the Mamare who is trapped this way.

"What type of books are you writing?"

"Can it be brought in bookshops?"

"You didn't get conned right?"

"Should we distribute some to our neighbors?"

"Buy me ice cream."

They actually tortured a NEET this way.

I didn't do anything wrong, why do I need to listen to my relatives teaching so obediently? Because I have kept it a secret until now. But I didn't mean to hide it from them... it, it is because no one ask so I didn't say, please don't take this the wrong way! Mamare acted like a Tsundere for no reason, falling into chaos.

Mamare(younger sister) surprised me.

Mamare(younger sister) said in a straight face "I already knew."

Why sister? Since you know you should have told me right?

According to her, she discovered when a book sample was delivered here, I thought she didn't notice.

As for Mamare(younger sister)...

Thank you for your supportive review 'It's about a virgin main character flirting with big breast girls'. Thanks to you, the relative interrogation session became a public execution. This fantasy process is like the king of home renovation, the expert renovation moved Mamare to tears.

I am unable to forget uncle's words, "Could it be that you still are..." Did he think Mamare is a magician? Be careful or you will make me cry.

Mamare(younger sister) unexpected attack left me on the brink of death.

That's why we bicker on the way home after the family meeting is over.

"Stupid brother is stupid", "Your taste in shoes is horrible", "hikkikomori", "Change the fridge at home" etc, she didn't show any mercy.

Mamare(Younger sister) was such a cute kid, shouting "Brother! Brother! This is delicious!" as she ate the whole bag of red ginger (mass produced package from a snack store in Okachimachi 2nd street); Not long ago she thought Childish means unpopular and lonely; even though she sings Doramon's song in the toilet.

Since she knew, I ask her casually if she wants a copy of Log Horizon. She gives me a condescending look and says: "No need, I already brought one." Hence, I forgave her.

But this sister is so infuriating.

Let's leave the topic of Mamare's family meeting to the side for now and focus on Log Horizon 4.

This book is about the battles against the attacks of the goblins and sahuagins on Sand Leaf peninsula. The beginner party with Minori and Touya who has been working hard the previous volume continues to shine! Shiroe who danced in an elegant place like a ball also show his capabilities!

This world is full of things that don't go our way, so we must do what we can to achieve our goals, to do what we believe is right, that is the theme of this volume. You might not get the result you want, that is why you have the freedom to give it your all. In other words, this is an expression of self-indulgence. The beginners and the people in Akiba gave it their all.

The 4th volume also made me feel I need to give it all I have.

The equipment of each character featured at the beginning of each chapter, is also the results of fan submission during July-August of 2011. The ideas we used are from bad_blade, ebius, ginnoougi, gontan_, hige_mg, hpsuke, iron007dd22, kuroyagi6, makotoTRPG, nekoanagi, roki_a, sawame_ja, sin_217, tepan00, and vaiso. Thank you everyone! Even though a lot of the submission did not make it to publication, I am still grateful to all netizens who participated, Log Horizon can only written with all your support.

Those who like this work after reading Log Horizon, please come and visit <http://mamare.net>! It provides the latest news and contents of Log Horizon, you can also find out news about the manga adapation here as well, a major announcement is coming soon!

As we move to a close, I am grateful to chief publisher Mr Shoji Masuda, the illustration master Harakazuro sensei who drew Crusty and the princess on the cover passionately, Monster designer who continued from the previous volume Hashimoto Mochichi, tsubakiya firm for the publishing designs (there are so many miscellaneous task!), the editorial department and my female editor the petite F-ta chan! The man who plays the straight man to Mamare's silly and horrible writing Mr Osako! Thank you everyone!

Next will be for the readers to enjoy this book, please take your time!

'I didn't want to admit, but only the taste of the old shop is top class.'

Mamare Touno

おつかれさまでした。
また次巻。
HARA



乙女たちが切ないため息をつく秋の午後、新たな敵がアキバの街に侵入した。



次の敵は、モンスターより手ごわい「人間」。
その攻撃目標は、〈円卓会議〉というアキバのシステム。
剣と魔法ではない、情報戦の応酬がはじまる！
腹ぐる眼鏡シロエは、この危機をどう乗りきるのか？

ログ・ホライズン

5 アキバの街の日曜日

橙乃ままれ 著 ハラカズヒロ 画 榎田省治 監修 [定価1,050円(税込)]

2011年11月末発売予定

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Credits

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